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THE
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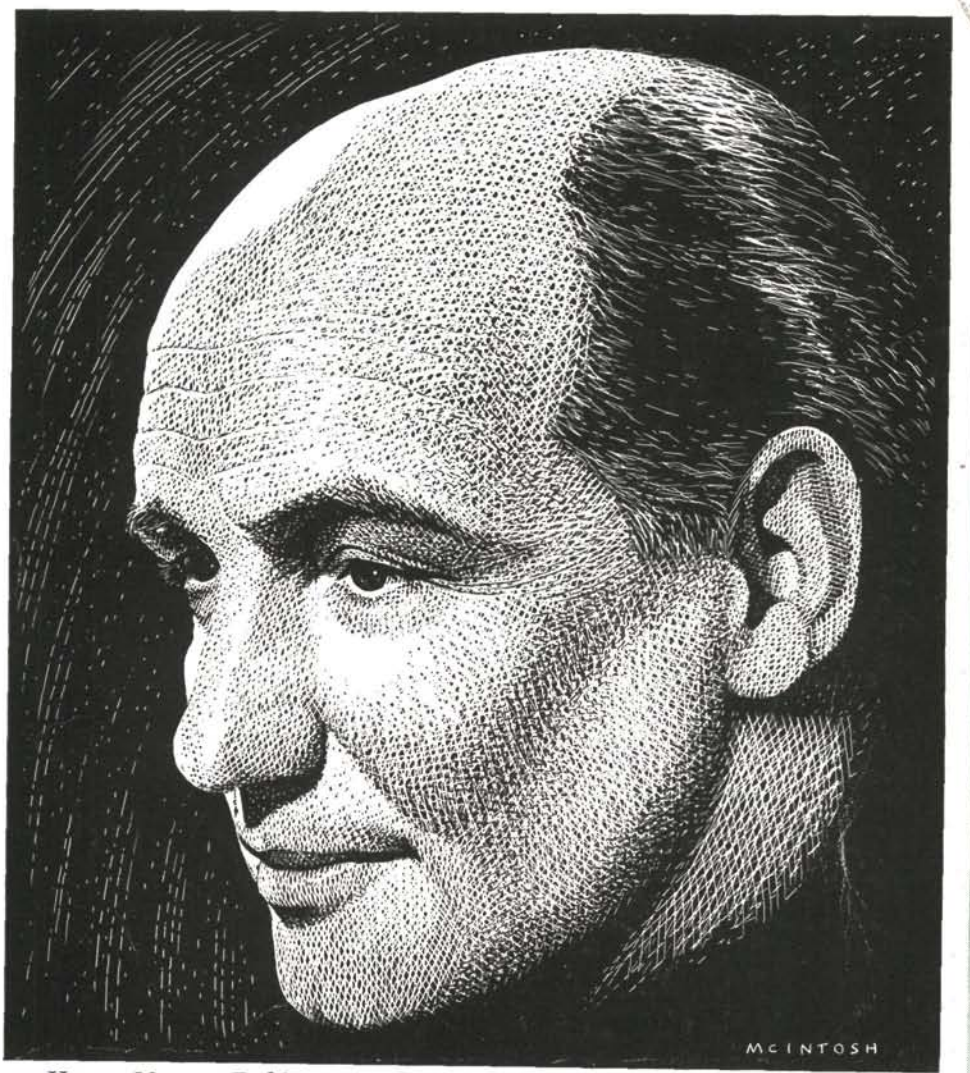

Henry Morton Robinson, author of "The Great Snow." *(See page 19)*

Death of the Iron Virgin

By HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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Duell, Sloan and Pearce present this season Seven Outstanding Novels by seven distinguished authors. More than one of these books will appeal deeply to almost every reader of *The Saturday Review.*

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AT ALL BOOKSTORES

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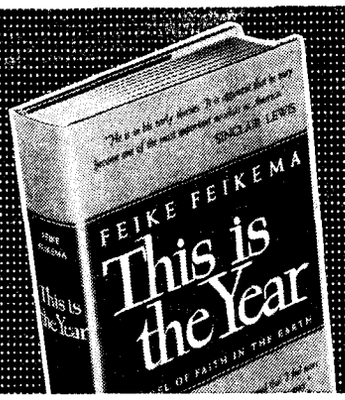
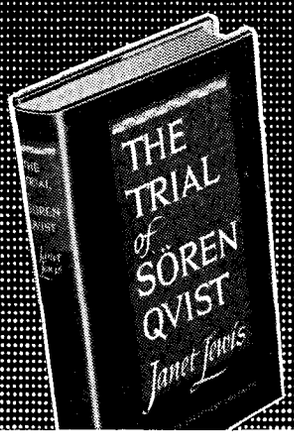
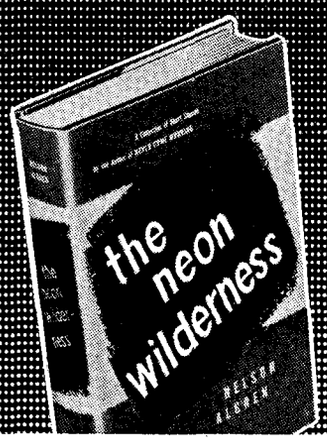
Seven selected novels for Saturday Review readers



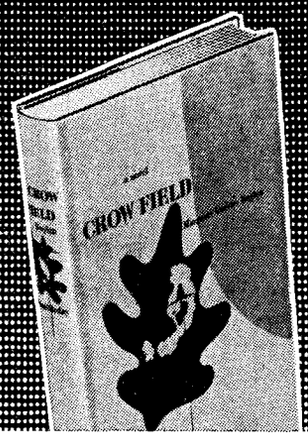
By Feike Feikema. "Reveals a prodigality that is overwhelming . . . the total effect is extraordinarily vivid . . . marks Feikema as certainly one of our important novelists."—*New York Sun.* The author of *The Golden Bowl* and *Boy Almighty* tells the story of Pier Frixen, hero of the land and hero of a magnificent novel. $3.00



By Janet Lewis. "This novel represents her talent at its best. She has taken a deeply moving seventeen-century tale, has transmitted it into winey prose . . . atmosphere as rich and authentic as life itself . . . a charm born of her peculiar eloquence."—*N. Y. Times Book Review.* $2.50



By Nelson Algren. Tales of the "tea" joints, flop-houses and taverns of Chicago's West Side. "Each of the twenty-four stories creates its own mood . . . the staccato precision of the writing must be read, remembered, and admired."—*Saturday Review of Literature.* $2.50



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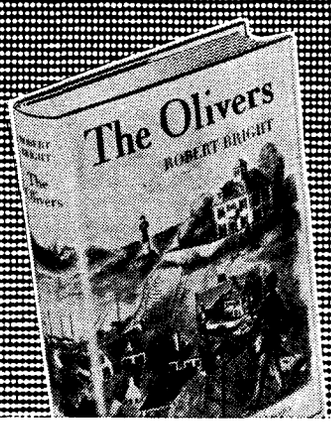

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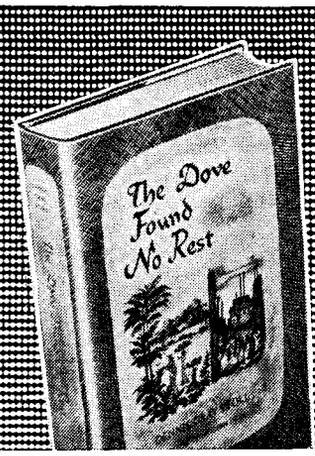

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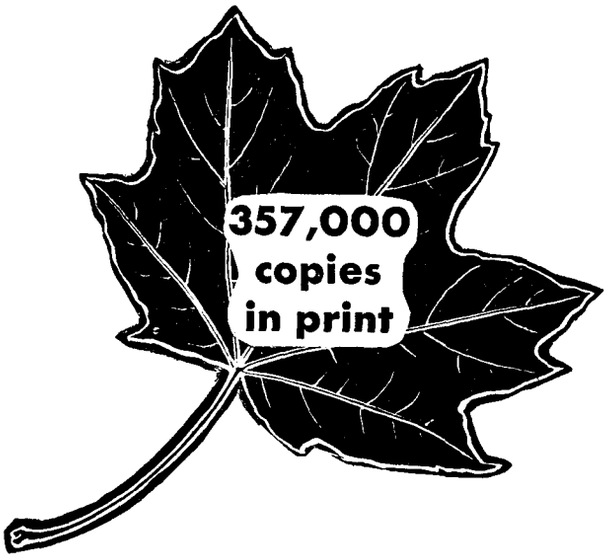

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TRADE Winds

"CHICAGO," says George Sessions Perry in his new book, "Cities of America," "is a thousand times more relaxed, less mannered than New York. One out-of-town visitor has remarked that Chicago's ever-vigilant girls have an uncommonly roving eye. He reasons that the cool brisk wind off the lake has something to do with this. It molds their dresses to their bodies like tights and just makes them feel frisky."

I should like to report to Mr. Perry and his out-of-town visitor that on the day we hit Chicago, its ever-vigilant maidens were neither relaxed nor feeling frisky. Very simply, they were freezing to death. The streets were glazed with ice, and a gale was blowing huge, moist snowflakes in all directions—into my face in particular. After boarding the Century in the magnificent Grand Central, and savoring the train's luxuries en route, one's arrival at La Salle Street Station is a sorry anticlimax under the best of circumstances. There is not a drabber, grubbier terminal in the country, and the confusion at the taxi stand is worse than Washington at the height of its war activities. This particular morning, in the snow, it resembled a free-for-all at a Legion convention. When we finally fought our way to a cab, my wife Phyllis and I found ourselves plus one Jane Pickens and minus one suitcase—a swap that any gallant gentleman would never hesitate to make!

WE REACHED THE HOTEL DRAKE somehow or other (I even reclaimed my missing bag a few hours later) and then I began to take soundings. Rose Oller of Marshall Field had gone to New York to sign a contract for a children's book about that famous elephant that careened about her department last season. Chicago without Rose is something like "Joan of Lorraine" without Ingrid Bergman. . . . Mr. Goodpasture of Brentano's wanted to know if I had heard about the man whose children had attended a progressive school and followed a schedule he strongly disapproved. "Madame," this gentleman told his wife coldly, "your two boys do not know their R's from a hole in the ground." . . . Max Siegel was bubbling with pride over his new record department and 475 advance orders for "Gentleman's Agreement." . . . Mr. Henry of Carson, Pirie, and Scott politely declined to brave the elements with me. "Not in this snow," he declared firmly. "I'd rather take stock." . . . Adolph Kroch, who retired for good and all several months ago, was so dismayed by the weather that he didn't get to the store until almost ten o'clock. . . .

THE ENTIRE KROCH family took us to lunch at the University Club, whose members were visibly steeling themselves for the ordeal of hearing me talk there the following evening. Mr. Kroch told of a happy experience that had befallen him on Christmas Eve. He was about to lock his private office and call it a day, when a stranger rushed in and said he simply had to have twelve very special books to give as gifts to his guests that evening. His credentials were unassailable, and his tastes expensive, and Mr. Kroch found him a dozen volumes that suffieed nicely. The total bill was slightly over twenty thousand dollars. "I'm really quite glad that I stayed those extra fifteen minutes," Mr. Kroch assured me. . . .

At the hotel, I had picked up a little magazine called *People,* which contained a profile of Adolph Kroch. "With a dollar and a half in his pocket," it began, "seventeen-year-old Adolph Kroch went to a Milwaukee factory to answer an advertisement for a bookkeeper. He had just come to this country, and thought a bookkeeper was a man who worked in a bookstore. To his surprise, he was put to work at a machine. His day was eleven hours long. His pay was eight dollars a week. Shortly after he started, a practical joker took advantage of his scant knowledge of English, and gave him the wrong instructions for operating the machine. His arm was painfully injured. But he stuck to the job, unshaken in his faith that opportunity comes to him who keeps up courage. . . . Today that immigrant boy is one of the most successful book dealers in the United States, and his opinions of new books are eagerly sought by the world's leading publishers." When I asked Mr. Kroch if this was all true, he smiled and said, "You mustn't believe everything you read in print." Then he added cryptically, "You, of all people, should know that!" . . .

MARSHALL REINIG, executive vice president of the new *Book Merchandising Magazine* (22 East Huron Street, Chicago, Ill.), plowed through the snow to show me some of his elaborate plans for future issues. This magazine is intended primarily for retail booksellers, but it has plenty of appeal for general readers as well. I suggest that you write and ask for a sample copy. . . .

FANNY BUTCHER HAD SUMMONED the members of Chicago's P.E.N. Club

"Sorry, gents, I can't tell you. My publisher has exclusive rights to my life story."

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"From where I sit"

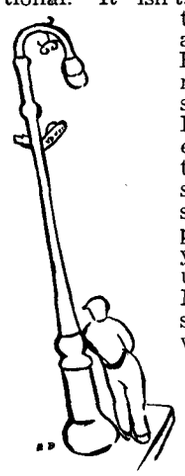
MAKE no mistake, **The Amboy Dukes** by IRVING SHULMAN is a rough book, rough because the kids in the Duke gang in Brooklyn are rough. There is almost no single sentence in this book reminiscent of that gentleness we like to associate with our own childhood and childhood in general.

Recently I gave a lecture at New York University. Having gone to college in an atmosphere that partook of what Schrafft's calls gracious living, I was surprised to find NYU looking like a cross between a chem lab and a garage. In the halls outside the classrooms, policemen strolled, stooping occasionally to squint through peepholes to see if anyone was smoking. During the lecture the students really kept me on my toes, asking direct questions, criticizing me openly, and generally challenging my political views which they dragged into the discussion lord only knows how. It was rough.

But it was the hope of America, kids like this flailing each other's ideas; kids with a social conscience; kids who could be counted on to vote in the nation's elections. These were citizens in a rough new world.

But it wasn't anywhere near so rough as were **The Amboy Dukes.** For there was a bunch of kids, all in their teens, having been dislocated from normal family life by the war, going to school as if it were a plague zone, and when they thought at all, thinking in terms of comic strips and gangster pulps and movies where they could neck and pet. Unbridled by a sense of values, they went hog wild in whatever they did. And this was bound to bring them into hard and disastrous conflict with the more rigid society of their elders and their elders' law.

You may not like this book. You may think it's trying to be sensational. It isn't. Too many people thought the same thing about James Warner Bellah's *Ward 20.* You may think it's a lopsided picture of youth. It is—of *youth in general* as we have liked to think of them ever since Plato said we should. But it's a true picture of one kind of youth, a kind that it's up to us and those NYU students to do something about when we go to the polls.



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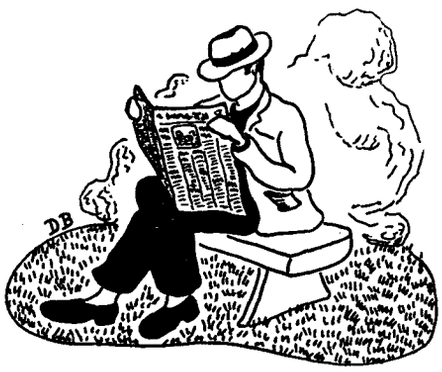
DOUBLEDAY 50th Anniversary

to her home for cocktails, and they arrived faithfully by droshky and dogsled. Novelist Arthur Meeker protested weakly that he should have been home toiling on his new book. "He spoke in similar vein when I saw him in Santa Barbara," reminisced Fanny. "He warned me, 'I can't entertain you; I'm working on my novel.' Then he wrote two lines in the next five weeks. The day after I arrived, *I* turned in a 2,000-word piece on a fiesta I never saw." "What do you mean, you never saw it?" demanded Meeker. "I took you to it!"...

We dined in the Pump Room at the Ambassador with Clare Jaynes, the Fred Babcocks, S. and S.'s peripatetic Jack Goodman, and Columnist Irv



Kupcinet, but for one reason and another, I remember little of the merry badinage. The Pump Room is the place in Chicago where you see all the people you thought you had left behind at "21" and the Stork Club; they rarely turn up again until you get off the train or plane at Los Angeles. It is also the place where shashlik, served on a flaming sword, is the specialité de la maison. I think I have already told you the story of the candidate for Alcoholics Anonymous who observed all these flaming swords in comparative silence for a spell, and then informed a waiter, "I want three lightly scrambled eggs, and don't forget: I want 'em served on a sword!" . . .

ON OUR SECOND and last day in Chicago, the literary world was rocked to its foundations by the announcement that Miss Kenneth Horan, of the Robert Capulet McCormicks, was going to up and marry John William Rogers, of the Marshall Montague Fields. Until this moment, it was believed that no inhaler of the rarefied air of the Tribune Tower had even recognized the existence of a toiler on the *Sun,* let alone harboring matrimonial designs on same! Gossips had it that Mr. Rogers and his bride would soon shake the dust and coal smoke of Chicago from their garments and seek serenity and repose in his native Dallas. At last reports, however, he was still editing the *Sun* book section, and planning ever more ambitious issues for the future. . . .

CHICAGO BOOKMEN were also worrying about the tactics of a recent addition to publishing circles who was brazenly declaring that he could "plant any novel on the national best-seller lists by the judicious outlay of a couple of thousand dollars," and citing his own record with a recent highly publicized book to prove his point. His scheme was simple, if reprehensible. By sending a stream of accomplices into a dozen carefully selected bookstores to purchase copies of the book he was pushing, he could be sure that a sufficient number of these stores would report the book a "best seller" to insure its place on the *Times, Tribune,* and *Publishers' Weekly* lists for one week at least. "All it costs me," he pointed out, "is the price of the book bought and I can always resell them to the company that buys the picture rights. As a matter of fact, I learned the trick out in Hollywood itself. When a studio is trying to persuade a star to accept a certain part, it helps a lot to tell him the book is a great seller all over the country. We used to get the local shops to order big quantities, promising we'd buy them all ourselves if they'd make window displays and pile them in the front of their stores for a few days. Then we'd steer our star into a few of these shops, and let him see what was going on with his own eyes. You'd be surprised how often the scheme worked." . . . Several publishers have been trying to find ways of putting a stop to this flagrant corruption of the best-seller lists for some time, but, pending a possible solution, have hesitated to make a public announcement. Now *Variety,* on the ball as usual, has broken the story wide open in its issue of March 26, and something simply will have to be done about it. Meanwhile, *SRL* readers, at least, will, I hope, select their books because of the authors and the contents, and not because they have been ballyhooed into the best-seller lists! . . .

I MUST TELL OF the kindly gentleman at the University Club who asked my wife if she was a writer too. "Yes, I am, in a way," she answered, "but I don't think my book would interest you. You see, it's a juvenile." A few minutes later she overheard him telling his companion, "Remind me to buy a copy of Mrs. Cerf's book tomorrow. I always like to have copies of books by people I've met personally. I must say, however, she's given her book the queerest title! It's called 'A. Juvenile'!" BENNETT CERF.

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Knopf has the Novels for 1947

CHAPTER

One

IT WAS on the second of May, in the morning, that Robert Whittle, Professor of History at Caraway College, decided that the world was coming to an end. Spring was in its earliest leaf; on Elm Street the trees were just beginning to burst their buds, and the forsythia blossomed on the lawns. The sweet air of morning, the gentle light, a little misty, yellow as a buttercup in the sun, blue as a cornflower in the shade, washed the quiet streets of Rivertown and the campus of Caraway College, where young men and women, carrying their books in layers like so many slabs of brick, walked in a morning dream from class to class.

It was not only coming, thought Mr. Whittle, but it was coming very soon, it was almost here.

He sat at the breakfast table, and looked at

3

"He can take an ordinary dumb, dreaming human . . . and he will give the poor oaf dignity and nobility and whisk him away on a modern magic carpet and let him savor the wonders of the world."

—*Chicago Tribune*

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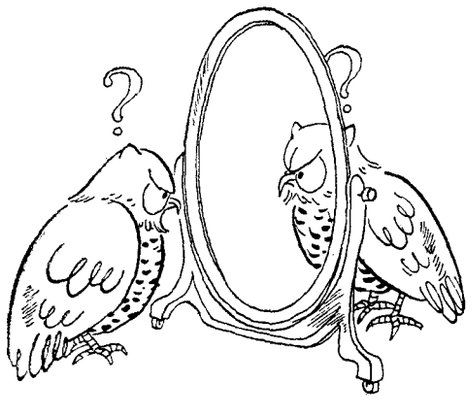

More fun than mirrors

IF there's anything more popular than a mirror or a photograph, it's probably a book that reminds you of yourself, or of something you're familiar with. Books like that are better fun than mirrors, or photographs, because they leave room for personal interpretation. For instance, there was the West Indies vacationist, complete with sunburn and hangover, who found a book about Puerto Rico[1] that was closer to his memories of the island than an album full of photographs. Or the man, studying our own postwar thinking, who ran across a book about 1920 Germany[2] that was like a mirror in its precise reflection of our own times. Or—and here is the immediate point—the readers, writers or publishers of bestsellers who are going to come upon MISS ALLICK and feel like Catherine the Great before she broke the mirrors.

MISS ALLICK is a book lots of people will try *not* to see themselves in. For it is a chronicle of the imitative mind abroad in our generation, the story of all those bestselling second- and third-raters rolled into one who, because of extraordinary ability to anticipate public taste and meet it with acceptable literary packages, control that taste and determine the quality of the product. Miss Allick, our heroine, is like the man who always picks the right horse; or like Typhoid Mary. She never fails to write a winner, and she never fails to infect her readers with a growing intellectual decay. In her, Rupert Croft-Cooke has created a character who is the concentration of all he finds wrong in English letters today. And the story of her progress from little governess to shining novelist is a success story of satirical horror for those of Mr. Croft-Cooke's persuasion. For hers is a success which neither taste nor reason can uphold; a symbol of the wrongness of times which results in exalting the shoddy when we should be acclaiming genius.

Croft-Cooke is hitting out at mass production of morals and culture patterns by irresponsibles, and Allick is not his private monster, but the monster of those of us who have made her existence possible. For twenty years she has held sway over each successive literary group in England, and Mr. Croft-Cooke's England is pretty much like our America. Through all these years, Allick is perpetually writing in anticipation of the public taste, and because she is able to feel the paths it will follow, she is always there to meet it with another book. When times are feverish and it's smart to be off-color, Allick writes a naughty book. When that wears off and there's a mass yearning for the peace of the country, Allick goes rural. But whatever her subject, she is always enough in advance to hit the crest of the tide.

Probably no one knew Allick very deeply, as one person can know another. The man who tells her story studied her from the days of her first novel throughout her successful career. But though his observation was almost clinical, he cannot explain the phenomena that she is. When he and the reader first meet Allick as a governess, she looks at the little boy who will be her charge and says, "So this is Shayle!" This very ordinary remark is the beginning of a strange and compelling love affair. But it remains a love affair that cannot be explained in terms of common experience, and it is certainly not the sort of romance most of us will ever know. As governess, she is like the caricature of a governess; as a novelist, she is like the caricature of a writer.

Her story is, of course, a fiction. But it is fiction so knowingly written and so closely paralleling fact that it continually throws back known things from the mirror of the mind. At the end of the book, the thing in all of us which continues to fight back against the second rate, is expressed in the words of a dead man who was Miss Allick's husband. In speaking for the author, his words speak also for all of us who must some day look into the mirror of a literature we have helped to create by allowing ourselves to be its market:

> In accepting Allick as a "great" novelist we have set our standards no higher than the ground. Her incalculable popularity shows that she has spoken for her time and people. The two decades that made her famous maintained Baldwin as a prime minister, Mussolini as a dictator, Fascism as an ideal, the Oxford Group movement as a religion, the cinema as an art, week-end motoring as a recreation, greyhound-racing as a sport, the B.B.C. as a criterion.

But, he goes on to say:

> Somehow or other she must be stopped . . . She must never again be mistaken for anything more than she is — a cobbling sentimentalist piecing together the worn-out rags of what were once ideas. If we can find nothing better than Allick, let us admit it. Let us say quite simply that we have hit a bad patch. But don't let us see in her an artist and a prophetess and try to find in her curried staleness the pristine or the best.
>
> That must be the struggle, for quality in men and things. Give man freedom again, and he will find himself—anarchy if you like, or as much of it as you need to break these gimcrack fetters, this creeping regimentation that will choke the adventure, the honor, and eventually the virility out of him—and in things, a contempt for the second-best, the novels of Allick, the plywood and nickel of modern life. For I am certain that there is greatness still to be and that we can find it.

(1) THE FIESTA AT ANDERSON'S HOUSE, by Scott Graham Williamson
(2) STEPPENWOLF, by Hermann Hesse

Miss Allick

by RUPERT CROFT-COOKE

$2.75

AT ALL BOOKSTORES

HENRY HOLT & COMPANY

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As early as 1855 Walt Whitman was calling for "vital women." D. H. Lawrence "determined to put sex into Heaven." James Branch Cabell "was no fanatical Puritan in reverse." In his writing Sherwood Anderson was frank, never obscene.

Death of the Iron Virgin

HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

AFTER the First World War, there had to be, of course, a new literature, but the new men whose background had been a world in confusion had to grow up and become articulate first. There was plenty of novelty in the early Twenties, a novelty, however, in appraisal of our past and immediate present rather than a shift of values between one generation and the next. What we were getting in those years was really a mopping-up process, in which great talents formed in the Zion of our confidence were revealed in their maturity, and the last hampering conventions of the previous age cleared away for the benefit of all. The most troublesome of these conventions, let us state it formally, was the limitation in British and American literature upon the depiction and expression of sexual desire. It was in these early Twenties that new rounds of a battle almost a century old were fought. This is what Boyensen meant when, apropos of Howells, he wrote of the iron maiden for whom all American books had to be censored. This was the tabu that could not be broken except in the literary equivalent of a speakeasy. This was the suppression that became intolerable for many, though by no means all, good writers when realism triumphed over romance in the early twentieth century. It is probably more than a coincidence that the climax of the battle came in the years when the United States went publicly dry and privately wet, and law was defeated by custom.

There was a real battle. The new frank and free books drew heavy artillery fire from the philosophers, bazooka shots from the flippant, and stink bombs (I use the figure purposely) from the foul-minded seeking notoriety. I do not mean to be flippant myself, for this was one of the most important revolutions in taste since the common people began to read in the nineteenth century. Yet when I remember the humorless books on how to be successful sexually which came from the presses every week or so, and the equally humorless denials in other books that sex life in America had any importance except for the birth rate (and to mention that was indecent), it is hard to keep to the point.

The battle for frankness did not begin, of course, in the Twenties. It was in 1855 that Whitman demanded freedom for soul *and* body, showing what he meant in "Leaves of Grass." Also the somewhat synthetic bohemians of the 1890's, such as Edgar E. Saltus, had made quasi-historical characters say and do what the authors did not dare pin upon their contemporaries. Dreiser, too, had broken the tabu, and been suppressed. Yet in these early Twenties a new and much extended audience of readers of serious books began to use their common sense and protest that women, youth, and the home no longer needed protection from the facts of life.

For a while it was the good writers who needed protection against their fellow writers, and still do. The first effect of the cracking of the tabu might well have frightened an editor not well-read in pre-Victorian literature. Soon every week brought a new novel which was serious, dull, and filthy. No need to mention titles; these books are all dead now. What had been released along with the exploring imagination of the gifted writers were the twisted mentalities who were determined that everything sexual should be revealed, even if they went to jail for it. This is very different from pornography, which is a trade, not a mission, and is always functioning underground.

SUCH writers did not go to jail, for no one read them except editors and the morbidly curious. The "unco guid" were after more distinguished scalps, and their instinct was right even if their tactics were wrong. It was the artists, the real writers with a deserved public, whose books were powerful and persuasive, whom they attacked. The Societies for the Suppression of Vice largely ignored the dull sexual realists, the pornographers and slickly smutty magazines, and tried to suppress real talent before it could shape the public imagination. Their great defeat came in the famous decision of Judge John Woolsey on the question as to whether the United States Customs should be allowed to forbid the importation of James Joyce's "Ulysses." Judge Woolsey admitted the indecency, defended its place in a major work of art where sensual man was the subject, and asserted the right of Americans to publish and read books composed in this respect for adult consumption. I was an *amicus curiae,* as they call it, in that action. In my report I insisted that Chaucer's "Wife of Bath's" Pro-

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logue, that glory of medieval humor, would have to be thrown to the Puritan wolves if "Ulysses" was given to them to tear to pieces.

Of course it was the direction of the attack upon books important because of their originality in the history of literature that made the situation intolerable. Victory was won, except in Massachusetts. There, bad laws and an unnatural alliance between Puritanical Catholic Irish and the remnants of Boston's genteel age has kept up the persecution. With the rather lamentable result that, for example, "Strange Fruit," a controversial novel about the relations of whites and Negroes in the South, was condemned in Boston and characterized as an indecent book because of its use, in a passage where realism justified it, of one four-letter word; while it was accepted, important controversy and all, in the South where the scene was laid. The old Puritans, of course, were concerned with heresy in religion or politics, not with sexual frankness, which they practised extensively themselves. But the habit of censorship is persistent, and dangerous because it is so difficult to get agreement upon what shall be censored. After a very few years of the new freedom in the Twenties, the sexual novel whose only excuse was information about the hidden ways of sex ran its course.

Yet if we had no fanatic for sexual sincerity with the power or style of D. H. Lawrence, in irony we had at least one masterpiece, about which the battle raged. The Virginian James Branch Cabell was, in the early Twenties and before, an idol for young stylists, and his novel "Jurgen" (1919) belongs, I think, among the enduring contributions to American literature of this period. Cabell was a typical product of an aristocratic society grown smug and conventional. He was too much of a gentleman to write a book dirty in words and depicted acts. I think the new realists of sex must have bored him as much as they did me. Yet the stale and hypocritical moral code of his native state enraged a man who had been nourished by the great romantic literatures. He was no fanatical Puritan in reverse like D. H. Lawrence, for whom the full expression of sexual desire was a moral passion. Lawrence's lean, ascetic face, with its sparse red beard, his burning eyes, his dogmatism, gave me a vision of what Savonarola may have been like. He could write like an angel, but it was a rebel angel determined to put sex into Heaven.

Cabell was no such Puritan. His passions of all kinds were, I should say, cool, and it is evident that he shared the conviction of most writers whose youth was passed in the Twenties, that saying it beautifully (or wittily) was rather more important than what was said. If he could score a hit on the ideals of "pure Southern womanhood," then current, or upon the stale religion and stiff moral conventions of his native society, he was content. Quite cynical, like most realists, he was more interested in the demolition than the results. Allusion and symbolism were his weapons—both shrewdly contrived to mean much while saying little. Not until the prudes attacked him when "Jurgen" was published did he become elaborately indecent under a veil of words, so that he might safely laugh at his more stupid critics. It was not good for his art, which reached its peak in "Jurgen," an extraordinary feat of the imagination, even though the new generation does not like the brilliant artificiality of its style. This novel brought about legal action from which he emerged with a notable victory for free speech—and a grievance.

Sherwood Anderson and Sinclair Lewis were often charged with obscenity by enemies more angry than discriminating. What their critics really meant was frankness in statement and description, a very different matter. Neither man, so far as I can remember, was ever lewd in his books, as Cabell (like the great satirists of earlier ages) most certainly was, if your mind was sensual enough to translate into gross terms the play of his intellect over passion and prudery. Sexuality, like avarice, greed, jealousy, ambition, and fear, has now taken its rightful place on the artist's palette, to be used or misused according to his honesty, his intellectual health, and his skill. The new American literature of the Hemingways, the dos Passoses, and the rest, was to benefit by this gain in permissible frankness when frankness is requisite to art, and the art is worthy.

No thorough study of the relations between creative literature and the sexual passions has ever been made, at least for English. We know from English literature that reticence in the affairs of sex did not become a social custom when men and women talked together or read the same books, until the decades just before and just after 1800, some time between Laurence Sterne and Jane Austen. The Shandy household talked with a freedom which would have shocked a New York dinner table in the Twenties, though probably not in the Forties. Whereas, among Jane's witty and intelligent females, the merest suggestion of what she called "indelicacy" was a fault which differed only in degree from adultery. By the 1830's and 1840's, restraint on these topics had been frozen into habit, and not only in the fashionable writers of sentiment.

What thawed the ice of linguistic chastity, and made literature again as articulate in sexual passion as it had always been in love? Surely no sudden warming of the amorous imagination. We have testimony that deacons

"Shadow Dance." —*Etching by Martin Lewis.*

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in rigorous New England of the last century were noted for their repertoire of dirty stories, and sociologists believed that the quantity, if not the quality, of sexual relationships outside as well as inside marriage, is fairly constant throughout Christian ages. It seems very probable that the revolt against Anglo-Saxon prudishness began with the rise of feminism in the nineteenth century. To put it abstractly, it was an inevitable, if belated, aspect of democratic progress. This was bound to happen when woman began to be regarded as a companion rather than as a helpmate of man, with equal rights and privileges. In 1855, Walt Whitman was calling for athletic women, sunburned, vigorous, ripe for love, equal in vital force to men. And after the contemporary female of the classes who set the fashions had given up invalidism and the glamor of frailty, which was her first resort when industrialism and a lowered birthrate had made her job at home a relative sinecure, such women came in abundance. They were not likely to be content with books which left a quarter or a half of their emotional life untold. Any strong-living woman of the later nineteenth century knew far more about the motives of the female characters of the novels she read than the male authors were allowed to tell. The tabu was bound to be broken.

Whitman's experience in breaking it was not encouraging. The hullabaloo set up by the guardians of literary morality over his alleged indecencies obscured his real greatness and his full purpose for half a century. My impression gained from a study of the literary Gestapo that hounded him, is that it was the men not the women who felt themselves responsible for reticence. The men were prudish (though not with each other) because they seem to have been afraid that the subservient, loving, and utterly pure women they had created out of their romantic imaginations would, if encouraged by reading, become human beings with senses like the men's and throw off the leash of domesticity. Surely this is why Dr. Johnson approved of that snobbish and somewhat stuffy novel "Evelina," which Fanny Burney wrote in defense of innocence and "delicacy."

Of course, once the "new woman" (that favorite nineteenth-century term) began to appear in society in three dimensions, one of which was sexual, the "pure woman" who must be protected from even a knowledge of the facts of life began to seem a little absurd. Honest writers (both men and women) demanded the right

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Bronzino's Mixture

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

IT was Dove Dulcet, the literary agent. He doesn't usually travel on my branch of the railroad, and I thought he looked a little glassy-eyed; but I couldn't let so old a friend escape without greeting, and sat down beside him. After we got out of the noise of the tunnel he began to talk.

"Yes," he said, "I'm often reproached for not having what it would be luxurious not to have."

"But you, of course, have it," I suggested. "What on earth can it be?"

"My life is so embarrassing," he moaned (he's rather like Reggie Fortune sometimes), "because when I'm truly intent on my private fancies I

forget civilized convenance. I'm almost afraid of meeting an old pal, or someone who made a shortcut into being an old pal, for fear I won't identify him."

"My name is Chris Morley," I said. "As a matter of fact I'm one of your quite profitable clients. You've made my life embarrassing too. Sometimes you sold my stuff before I'd even written it. Then I *had* to do it, and everyone was disappointed. Nothing spoils a story like writing it."

It only takes a little sharp dialogue to brighten Dove up, and he brightened.

"I can tell you before we get to Jamaica," he said. "I'll have to change there and go back to Woodside. I can see, by the fact you're here, that I'm on the wrong train."

I supposed Dove had been celebrating; but this is what he told me:

* * *

What I have is memory. Not social or factual or quiz-program memory, but something damnably different: esthetic memory, total emotional recall. Suppose I want to reread something I enjoyed before. I need probably three years before I can do so. I don't forget fast enough. That's the tragedy of the book business. All other appetites renew themselves quickly.

In my profession I have to read new stuff all the time, in typescript or in galley proof. I have to make up my mind what I think about it, and what others will think. But secretly, old client, I don't much care. I made up my mind long ago what sort of stuff I enjoy.

Page Freud, Jung, Adler, Horney? Why sure! Retreat from reality? Exactly so! When we mature and murify, when the Iceman Cometh (Saint Frigid!) we retire like Walt Whitman, to the certainties suitable to us.

You know that midtown street where there face each other a famous bookstore and a notable bivalve-monger? I frequent them both, because they are efficient and not arty. Bibliophiles from one side and bon mangeurs from the other meet and exchange curiosities. Finnan haddie or pigs-in-blankets (though more costly) can be matched against Penguin Books or Oxford Classics. While Gus the waiter is on safari for devilled bones, or Harry the bar is at the other end of the counter, you may think of a book your friend ought to read. There'll be plenty of time to hare across and buy it at Bronzino's before Gus is back from that overworked kitchen. You might even be able to detax it as Entertaining the Trade. That's how they learn about Literature.

SO one day my friend and I, preceding our finnan haddie with a little gin-and-ginger, talked about books we wished we could read again. Was it Conrad? Conan Doyle? Cutcliffe Hyne? Frank Stockton? Even Anthony Hope, or Rider Haggard, or O. Henry? I know it was some corn du siècle. At their nadir (and how often they were) they were terrible. Actually I think we were talking of George Gissing, his sensitive sad short stories, rarely noticed by anyone. Do you know how much better they are than his laborious novels? Nor did he. But we had read them, my friend and I, when they and we were young. Whatever you call it (scrapple or haggis or umbles or toad-in-the-hole) everyone needs his own kind of tripe. As we used to say, in the old newspaper days (but never in print), Don't

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muzzle the Ochs that treadeth the corn. Nothing is so dangerous, in print, as a quotation from the Bible.

My friend had never read "Ryecroft" (the most warmblooded of all books-about-books) so again I questioned Gus. He said, "Did you say gin an' haddie or finnan haddie?" and resumed his bustling trot. I flitted across to Bronzino's Bookstore. I wanted to consult Lorry Lorrequer, who has charge of Editions. Bless his heart, he is almost the only man who was raised on the very same hooey that I was. As we said simultaneously one time, after several snorts, we are hooey generis. From Gus's service tray I snatched a roll in the likelihood that Lorry wouldn't have had his lunch. He hadn't; he was being demure on the telephone, in the act of vending some Collector. (They always call at lunch time. They themselves have ulcers and can't eat.) I waited, mannerly. Then he tilted an ear, and I mumbled, "Come over to Billy Bivalve and have a Ryecroft and soda."

"Not likely," he whispered. "I'm on the beam, selling Complete Millay in a binding. We always keep her in Morocco, or the Levant, just on the chance."

"It's certainly safer," I said. "But it ties up a lot of capital? I hope those de luxe binders give plenty of time?"

Lorry looked pained; like what they call in catalogues *bruised, slightly shaken.* Patiently but firmly he finished his telephone conversation, writing down something on an order slip. I could see it was in the bag—indeed I could almost hear the levantine binder dropping the bag.

"If you haven't got 'Ryecroft,'" I said, "how about 'The House of Cobwebs'? Remember? Constable, 1906. My friend hasn't read that. Gosh, how I envy him! Those dim, desiccated, despondent stories! Their lurking, lugubrious laughter!"

HIS face grew bleak. "You know perfectly well it's out of print. I'd lend your friend my own copy, but I read it in bed last week, and I'm going to do it again tonight. It's the only thing that gets me through the Wedding-Present Season; all half morocco and half literature."

"But how can you, so soon?" I cried. "Oh, Man of Feeling, remember the reading we first knew, when we were lifted to glory and learned the nobility of print? How rekindle that dazzle of innocence? The thrill of our boyhood, when Kaa and Baloo and Bagheera broke the bandar-log at the Cold Lairs? When the *Narcissus* went over on her beam ends and the chapel-crazed lunatic fights his way back to the galley: 'As long as she swims I will cook!' Or damn it all, poetry too—'The Eve of St. Agnes,' or Ulysses on the beach with Calypso. No, I guess I didn't really twig that then. Very few of the teachers do, even now."

It was hard to understand him for a minute or so; he was busily chewing the roll I brought. It sounded something like this:

"Surely you know that if everyone were like us there wouldn't be any book trade at all? I beg you, don't encourage people to feel that writing can be so important."

While he surmounted a crusty knob I was able to say, "Damme, writing isn't just showing-off; it's showing-in."

He liked that, and tried to show me so by an affectionate grin that showered out a whole fringe of crumbs.

"I want to read 'Ryecroft' again," I said, "and *Mycroft,* and *Pyecroft,* and even *Beecroft.* But I can't. I've read them all within a year, and I haven't forgotten enough. Keats, my goodness, Keats! Empty some dull opiate to the drains! You know, when I was a teacher one time I had a class of boys in Keats, one of them pulled on me the accidental atom bomb of genius. He thought Keats's Morphean amulet was a Morphine Omelet. Listen, Lorry, close the magic casements so we can open them again!"

It was his mouth he opened; I could see the last of the baker's chaw disappearing, but just then his secretary said, "Atwater on the wire again, Mr. Lorrequer. He wants to know, haven't you got Millay in Full Vellum?"

He was really annoyed. After deglutition he said, "Tell him the only Full Vellum we have is Robert W. Service." And he added the most intelligent thing ever said about print since Gutenberg, who said, "If I like it I'll print it, whether they pay their bills or not." But what Lorry said was: "Why would you expect people to be any smarter about their reading than they are about love, or politics, religion, or peepshows?"

He leaned over to a cupboard behind his desk; I had always thought it probably contained unbound prints of Felicien Rops, the early Clara Tice, and those Japanese esoterica that neither MacArthur nor Hirohito ever saw. These are the Edition Man's last line of offense after a heavy customer has forced him to lunch.

No, it was something quite different. I saw a row of little phials with a pale dusky-pearly paregoric-looking liquor. He took one out and shook it; it clouded like a Baker Street fog. "Here you are," he said. "Medicine for case like yours, as Walt Whitman

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W. H. Hudson's Lost Years

EDWIN WAY TEALE and
R. GORDON WASSON

THROUGHOUT the works of W. H. Hudson there runs a singular paradox. His pages reveal at the same time so much and so little of his life. Virtually every book he wrote contains paragraphs of autobiography, nostalgic recollections of bird choruses of long ago, or great thistle years on the pampa. Yet these memories are timeless; they are linked to no calendar; they might have occurred on any one of a long succession of dawns or summer seasons. Hudson is at once bountiful and niggardly—lavish in memories that are vivid and charming, grudging in the precise placing of events.

Hudson rarely dated his letters. He misled friends as to the year of his birth. He seemed striving all through his later years to forget or ignore the passing of time and the fact that the beauty of the earth which he loved so passionately was slipping from his grasp. To the end, Hudson remained secretive about many events in his past. His friend and biographer, Morley Roberts, could only guess at the year in which he left the land of his birth for England, and he guessed wrong by four years. There are blank spaces, lost years, in the chronology of W. H. Hudson's life.

When the reader lays down "Far Away and Long Ago," he parts company with young Hudson as the boy is attaining manhood. The time is 1860 or thereabouts and the place Argentina. In sources hitherto available we scarcely pick up contact with him again until about 1880, years after he had arrived in England. Sometime during the intervening period he journeyed to Patagonia. In the main, however, the years are veiled. Faced with this absence of information, inventive admirers of Hudson have suggested all sorts of wanderings and adventures and romances.

Anyone who will take the trouble to seek out the annual report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution for the year 1866 will find a clew as to what W. H. Hudson was really doing during at least a portion of this period. On page 27 he will discover what is probably the earliest reference to Hudson in print. The item could hardly be more brief: "In South America, explorations have been made and collections transmitted by Mr. W. H. Hudson, in Buenos Ayres . . ." That dusty tome offers us nothing more, but in the reports for the three years immediately following, there are fuller acknowledgments of accessions of bird skins sent in by Hudson. Then, beginning with the 1870 volume, his name appears no more.

During the recent war, we inquired of Dr. Alexander Wetmore, now Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D. C., whether the archives there might still hold correspondence with W. H. Hudson concerning those bird-collecting activities of long ago. In the card catalogue Dr. Wetmore discovered a number of entries indicating the existence of such letters. But for the duration of the war the archives of the institution were stowed away in an inaccessible place. Now, with the war over, and thanks to Dr. Wetmore's courtesy and the hospitality of the Smithsonian Institution, we have examined a sequence of eight letters, six in Hudson's hand, that have been lying buried for some eighty years in the files in Washington. These letters are the earliest writings from Hudson's hand known to survive.

Two days after Christmas, in the year 1865, in Buenos Aires, Hinton Rowan Helper, the United States Consul, addressed a letter to Dr. Spencer Fullerton Baird, then assistant secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, commending to his attention a young man named William H. Hudson, who was then twenty-five years old. The American official who wrote that short and simple letter of presentation, introducing Hudson to a larger world, was himself a famous person at the time. He was the author of "The Impending Crisis," widely circulated attack on slavery, published in 1857. It contributed notably to the emotional ferment leading to the Civil War. Describing, as Mr. Helper's letter does, a man now famous who was then unknown, it is pleasing to observe that the terms of the letter reflect credit on all concerned, and across the span of the intervening years the words of the American Consul will leave no Hudson admirer unmoved:

United States Consulate,
Buenos Ayres, Dec. 27, 1865.

My dear Sir:

Professor Burmeister has sent me a Mr. Wm. H. Hudson, of Conchitas, Partido de Quilmes, in this Republic —a sort of amateur ornithologist, who would like to be employed in collecting birds, either for the Smithsonian Institution or for any museum, in the United States or elsewhere. Mr. Hudson has been recommended to me as quite capable in what he professes; and it is believed that he would give satisfaction to anyone who would employ him. I have asked him for his terms, but he says he has never made any collections except as a matter of mere interest to himself; and does not, therefore, know how to charge for his services. Should you feel disposed to employ him, paying him so much for such and such birds, or otherwise, I shall be happy to be, if possible, the medium of any under-

—From "Portrait of Latin America."

"In the Ecuadorian Andes," by Leonardo Tejada.

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standing or arrangement that would meet the wishes of both you and himself.

Yours very truly,
H. R. Helper.

Spencer F. Baird, Esq.
Smithsonian Institution,
Washington, D. C.

"The maps I have do not show where Conchitas is," wrote Dr. Baird in his reply to Mr. Helper, "but very little is known of the birds of any portion of the Republic. . . . It will give me much pleasure to see Mr. Hudson's collections and aid him in disposing of them." He pointed out that small, inconspicuous birds were of the greatest scientific interest and discussed possible prices. His letter was dated February 20, 1866.

MORE than a year went by before a letter from W. H. Hudson was delivered to Dr. Baird. It bears the Smithsonian stamp of February 12, 1867. It was written on September 5 of the previous year in Conchitas. This small community, lying a dozen miles from Buenos Aires, was in the township of Quilmes where, in 1841, Hudson had been born on the immortal *estancia* of the Twenty-Five Ombu Trees and whither his family and he returned to live when he was sixteen years old. From the newly discovered letters we now learn that Hudson was still living there when he was in his middle twenties.

In contrast to the difficult scrawl of later years, the penmanship of this initial letter was executed with copybook care. The paper, lavender-tinted, appears to have been cut from a notebook about seven by nine inches in size. A number of the letters show evidences of originating in notebooks; in some instances the holes left by the binding threads are apparent. Of the six letters from Hudson, this first one is the longest and perhaps the most interesting. But all of them convey a vivid impression of the eagerness with which he sought a place for himself as a field worker in the natural sciences. In this letter we have the earliest writing from W. H. Hudson's pen now known to survive.

Conchitas; Sep. 5th, 1866

Dear Sir,

Mr. Helper kindly favored me with a copy of your letter to him, in reference to my collecting birds. I hoped then, to have had, before September, two or three hundred specimans, but I have been disappointed: winter birds, which I tried to collect, were so very scarse this season, that several times I have ridden leagues without being able to obtain, or even see, a single speciman. Most of the birds I now send are of those that remain with us all the year, and are probably well known to naturalists: it is too early yet for summer birds, and as I will not collect any more for two or three weeks I think it best to send the few I have got.

I am not confident that they will reach you in a good state of preservation, as I have no experience in this kind of work; however, they are not many to lose, if they should be lost, and by the time your answer reaches me, I hope to have many more ready to send. I will also try to obtain some ostrich eggs, and a box of snail shells, of which I believe there are only four species in this country.

As you have not required the names of the birds, I have only thought it nessisary to mark the sex of each one, on the margin of the paper in which it is wraped; but if you desire it, in future, I can give with each species, a concise account of its habits. As to the locality in which they were killed, I shot them all within eight leagues of Buenos Ayres city.

You remark that the birds best to get are the small inconspicuous ones, as they are better for scientific purposes. By diligently searching through the swampy forrests along the river, I can obtain many birds of this description. There are here many species of the certhia, an extensive genus of small and homely birds. And it is reasonable to expect, that in a country so little explored by naturalists as this, many species may be found unknown to science.

You must know from the physical conditions of this country—the Province of Buenos Ayres—that it posesses a very scanty Fauna. Wide as is its extent, it is but one vast, level and almost treeless plain, affording no shelter to bird or beast from the cold South winds of winter or the scorching North winds that blow incessantly in summer: while the yearly droughts banish all the aquatic birds to great distances. But it is not only that there are few species that makes the work of a mere taxadermist unprofitable but these are often so widly seperated that vast tracts must be traversed to obtain them all. Though I am not a person of means, it is not from want of other employment I desire to collect, but purly from a love of nature. It would, however, be eisier for me to devote all my time to these pursuits, if I was required to collect other natural objects besides birds, as fossils, insects, grasses &c. and this would enable me to make thorough collections of all the birds. I am, Sir,

respectfully yours
William H. Hudson.

Prof. Spencer Baird.

We have retained in this letter the mistakes in spelling that Hudson made: wraped, forrest, taxadermist, widly, purly, eisier, nessisary, seperated. The observant reader will notice that at one point, where Hudson describes the pampa near his home, his style begins to take literary wings, but the fledgling in letters quickly drops back to earth again. It may be noted that instead of there being only four species of snails in Argentina, as Hudson imagined, there are nearer 400.

In this first letter Hudson refers to the *Certhia*. Small and inconspicuous, birds of the *Certhiidae* group are related to the North American brown creepers. The young collector does not hide his hope of finding among them, or among the other birds he shipped north, "many species . . . unknown to science." In a second letter, written from Conchitas in June 1867, Hudson notes that some "blackbirds" in a pasteboard box are being included with another batch of bird skins. He

Boys on the Dark

By Robert P. Tristram Coffin

TWO overalled small boys, blinded by fire
Play with their backs against the infinite night,
They are all laughter and wide-open mouths,
Their agile curves run hot with firelight.
On the dark backdrop which makes stars look small
And sad, the boys rankle with life and zest,
Neither feels the cold unwillingness
Of space upon his back forlornly pressed.

Neither boy knows what a brave good game
He plays with his small legs at widest span
Burning the maple leaves, he does not know
He is the whole hot history of man.
Light on the dark of bitter nothingness,
Bodies made of earth daring to be
Washed in the blood of suns and friends with fire,
Two brief boys swell with immortality.

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wishes Dr. Baird to examine them with special care; he is sure they represent a new species. Nine months pass. Then, in his fourth letter—also from Conchitas and dated March 15, 1868—we hear Hudson's cry of disappointment. No word has come from Dr. Baird about his "blackbirds." He reports that Dr. Burmeister, the head of the natural history museum in Buenos Aires and the man who introduced him to Mr. Helper, "desires much to know what name you will give the species." We may permit ourselves to believe that it was Hudson, more than Dr. Burmeister, who was anxious about the name and that he hoped it would be derived from his own.

TWENTY-FIVE years later, as Hudson began to write his "Idle Days in Patagonia," he recalled these dreams of his bird-watching years on the pampa.

> It was [he records] my hope to find some new species, some bird as beautiful, let us say, as the wryneck or wheatear, and as old on the earth, but which had never been named and never even seen by any appreciative human eye. I do not know how it is with other ornithologists at the time when their enthusiasm is greatest; of myself I can say that my dreams by night were often of some new bird, vividly seen; and such dreams were always beautiful to me, and a grief to wake from; yet the dream-bird often as not appeared in a modest grey coloring, or plain brown, or some other sober tint.

In those lines we listen to a poet recalling emotions of long ago. It is seldom given to us, in such circumstances, to make the clock of the years run backward until we are in the very presence of those emotions themselves. But this is precisely what the perceptive reader will discover behind the veil of these early letters of Hudson's that we now publish. The "blackbird" was a bird of his dreams. The bitter disappointment that lay behind those simple words to Dr. Baird is easy to understand. Although there is no further mention of the "blackbird" in the Smithsonian letters, the story does not end there. We now know the bird was one of the Argentine cowbirds, *Molothrus rufoaxillaris*. It had received that name when it was added to the lists of ornithology by an American scientist only a few months before Hudson wrote his letter. By this small margin he missed the realization of his early dreams. It is pleasing to note that only a few years later, during his Patagonian days, he collected a species of tyrant bird unknown to science. It was named in his honor *Cnipolegus hudsoni*.

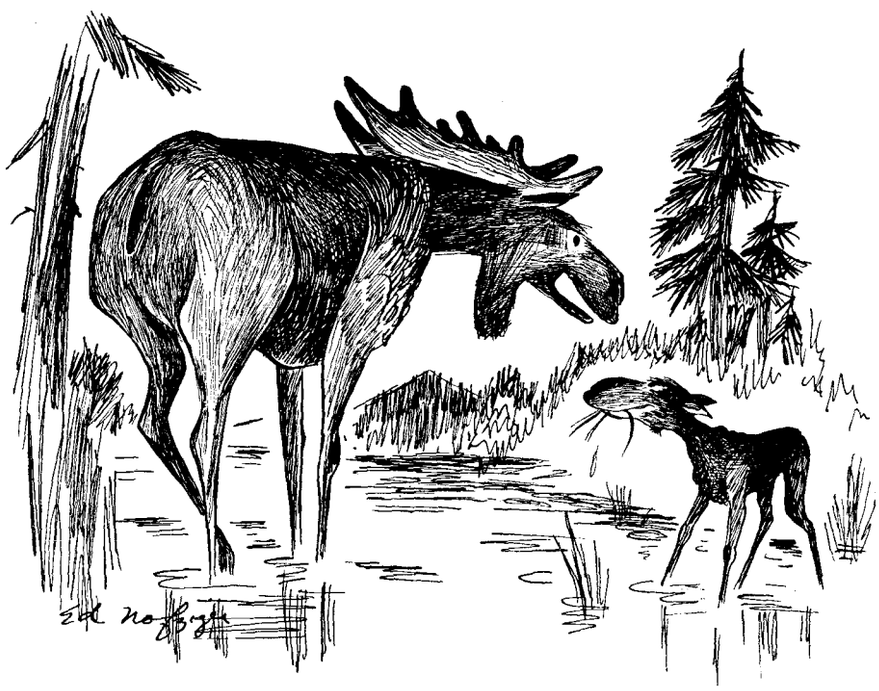
At the Smithsonian Institution, in Washington, among the birds ranged in rows in metal drawers, there are still a number of specimens sent in by W. H. Hudson in the eighteen-sixties. Even an uninitiated observer can quickly pick out the bird skins he prepared. Unfamiliar with the practices of conventional taxidermy, he folded the legs so they project forward instead of to the rear. Among these skins there are several specimens of the Argentine "blackbirds," the winged creatures that eighty years ago filled the head of the youthful collector with dreams of scientific achievement.

Another souvenir of those early days, linking us with Hudson, rests in the archives of the Smithsonian. The fourth letter to Dr. Baird contains this arresting sentence: "I enclose a card photograph of myself as desired. . . ." Those words led us to a search in the photographic files of the Institution, and resulted in the discovery of an unpublished photograph, the earliest known likeness of William Henry Hudson. This picture, taken at the studio of "Meeks y Kelsey, fotógrafos, 74 Belgrano, Buenos Ayres," shows the young naturalist as he appeared, replete with full beard, in his mid-twenties.

THERE are frequent references in the later letters to troubles, political and domestic. In 1868, Argentina was at war with the formidable tyrant Lopez of Paraguay. Hudson suggests Dr. Baird address his letters to Buenos Aires rather than to Conchitas as ". . . postal regulations with us, like everything else, are out of joint." In February 1868, he reports: "For several months I have not collected any birds at all, as I have had other occupations at home, besides we have not been exempt from the afflictions that have come on almost every household in this country. . . ." If Morley Roberts is correct, it was in 1868 that Hudson's father died. That event, leading to the break-up of the family and eventually to W. H. Hudson's departure from Argentina, must explain his veiled allusion.

Leaving Conchitas was a thought that was uppermost in Hudson's mind during the period covered by the Smithsonian letters. As early as June 1867, he was writing: "It is impossible for me to make complete collections while I remain at home." The following March he reported: "I shall perhaps leave the Conchitas. . . ." By June 3, 1868, his mind was made up. "At present," he concludes his final letter, "I am so occupied with other matters that I do not collect, but still cherish the hope that I will soon be able to give my whole time to a pursuit that affords me so much pleasure: I will of course, leave the Conchitas, as I think you will not require more duplicates of the species to be obtained here."

What travels followed, except for the Patagonian adventure, we do not know. The curtain drops once more after 1868. But for a brief span—the years between December 1865 and June 1868—that curtain has been lifted by the letters in the Smithsonian file. They reveal the hopes, plans, uncertainties of some of Hudson's lost years, of a period when as a scientific field-worker he was adding birds from the pampa to the collections of the Washington museum.



"No, *I won't* teach you the mating call!"

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Almanac for Spring Reading

A Random Guide to the Forthcoming Books

AMY LOVEMAN

April

TRUTH and fiction are so inextricably mingled in Michael Leigh's "Comrade Forest" (Whittlesey House) that it is difficult to say just where the author's imagination has been at play in this dramatic and moving tale of a woman guerrilla who spurred her Soviet companions on to heroic deeds against the German invaders. Based on the actual career of a Russian woman leader, the story has vigorous action and strong emotional impact.

★ ★

From overseas comes another effective work of fiction, Vercor's "Three Short Novels" (Little, Brown), a trio of tales varying in theme but alike in their pull on the emotions. They are tragic stories of resistance and collaboration.

★ ★

Readers who delighted in, even while they were horrified by Richard Hughes's "High Wind in Jamaica" will peruse with interest Martin Flavin's "The Enchanted" (Harpers), like the former a story of children forced into adventure and accepting violence and novelty with the appalling inconsequence of youth.

★ ★

Lusty, turbulent, packed with incident, a modern version of Fenimore Cooper's Western tales, only written with intimate knowledge of Indian history and not from a romantic fancy, "The Big Sky" (Sloane), by A. B. Guthrie, Jr., is the chronicle of a Kentucky youth who, striking out Westward to escape the exactions of a brutal father, lived with and fought the Indians, became a mountain man, and finally found a bride in the daughter of a chieftain.

★ ★

Human nature confronted with hardship and suffering and rising triumphant above them is eloquently portrayed in "The Mountain Journey" (Appleton-Century), by Janet Lewis, a novel too long but nevertheless memorable in its story of the trek of a young woman, about to bear a child, over the rough country of West Virginia to the hospital to which her husband is taking her.

There are good, honest humor of a country variety, pleasing romance, and ingenious situations as well as entertaining and believable persons in George Milburn's "Flannigan's Folly" (Whittlesey). How an Oklahoma farmer wooed and lost and entered the noose of matrimony in the end makes a sometimes highly amusing and always diverting tale.

★ ★

Anyone looking for gay escape reading need go no further to find it than Susan Kerby's "Fortune's Gilt" (Dodd, Mead), wherein is set forth how under the bright Italian skies an American woman and a British youth discovered a miraculous spring and how out of their discovery came vast business plans as well as unexpected romance. There's freshness and bounce to this tale.

★ ★

One of the most impressive novels to come out of France in recent years, Louis Aragon's "Aurélien" (Duell, Sloan & Pearce) is in the tradition of great French fiction. In it the story of a frustrated passion is projected against a brilliant portrayal of upper-class Parisian society in the years between the two world wars.

★ ★

Seen through the eyes of a political prisoner, exiled by the Fascists to a remote hamlet so poverty-stricken, forlorn, and neglected that its inhabitants claim Christianity stopped short of it, the Italian village and its people pictured in Carlo Levi's "Christ Stopped at Eboli" (Farrar & Straus) is one to stir perturbation as well as pity. This is an effective tale, grim, unsparing, and vivid.

★ ★

Just at the moment the indictments were handed down by the military tribunal against the Nazi criminals there arrived in Nuremberg Captain Gustav M. Gilbert, an officer in the U. S. Intelligence Service who promptly applied for transfer to the medical work for which he had been trained. Assigned as psychiatrist to the prisoners, he kept a day-by-day record of their reactions to the court proceedings during the trial, and now has published in "Nuremberg Diary" (Farrar & Straus) this inside chronicle, a report as absorbing as it is horrifying.

★ ★

The veriest tyro can read with profit and at least some measure of understanding Selig Hecht's "Explaining the Atom" (Viking), an admirably lucid exposition of the discovery and development of atomic energy from early times to the spectacular achievement of the atomic bomb.

★ ★

There's something new under the sun in Townsend Scudder's "Concord: American Town" (Little, Brown), for Mr. Scudder's manner of presenting American history, through its radiation from the New England town which twice in its annals knew a period of greatness and at all times took part through its representatives in American adventures, is both novel and highly interesting.

★ ★

"A case history of a sick nation, beginning with the crisis of the disease, and following through to convalescence and recovery," A. J. Liebling calls his "Republic of Silence" (Harcourt, Brace), an anthology which through fiction and factual reports, clippings from the resistance press, letters, etc., sets forth the tragic experience of France during the occupation.

★ ★

The present generation which hardly knows the name of Adah Isaacs Menken will nevertheless find entertaining reading in Allen Lesser's biography of an actress who once was the sensation of two continents, "Enchanting Rebel" (Beechhurst).

★ ★

Now, when April's here, is the time to read with special enjoyment Lewis Halle's "Spring in Washington" (Sloane), a birdlover's chronicle of the most delicious season of the year from the first cardinal which heralds it in January to the end of migrations in June. The author's philosophy enriches his descriptions.

May

Gilded circles in New York, naval officers at desk jobs in Panama, love, and misunderstanding are woven into a tale by Andrew Lee in "The Indifferent Children" (Prentice-Hall) which has a good deal of bite in its satirical picture of war administration in distant parts and war workers at home.

★ ★

Alan Wykes's "Pursuit Till Morning" (Random House) is a psycho-

(*Continued on page 45*)

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The Library

By BURR SHAFER

The restricted shelf.

The anthology of wit and humor.

The questionable book.

The underlined passages.

The clumsy patron.

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The Politician as Housekeeper for the Nation

ALAN VALENTINE

POLITICS in the United States is partly a game. It calls forth the same sudden interest, the same emotional enthusiasm, the same competitive rivalry, the same displays of immaturity, the same complete cessation of interest when the game is over that characterize the Army-Notre Dame football game or the World's Series. As with those events, millions of men who know little of the game and less of the players suddenly become profound experts and rabid partisans. Once election day is over the captains and the kings depart; the nation relaxes, and only the morning-after headaches and the morning-after quarterbacks remain. Banished from the headlines, half-forgotten by their most ardent supporters, the defeated politicians retire to limbo there hopefully to await next season's call of the people.

The art of government has had fair treatment in literature, but the art of politics has been slighted. Government has always attracted philosophers and idealists from the time of Plato, and such men are given to fine literary expression. But the realism of politics has attracted chiefly pragmatists and men of action, less given to recording their thoughts on paper. Hence we have few great essays on the nature and uses of politics and politicians. In the absence of spokesmen for the defense, we accept at face value the criticisms of the prosecution.

The classic of realistic politics was written by Machiavelli and the world is shocked by his cynicism. He advocates falsehood, bribery, and even murder if essential to a politician's ends. But Machiavelli, as a good politician himself, would have recognized the more refined procedures of our times, and today would revise his methods accordingly. He would have done this for practical reasons beyond deference to improved moral standards. In Renaissance Italy, the sources of political power were the prince or the oligarchy. To control that power, only a few men need be won over, corrupted, or liquidated. Machiavelli today would have seen that in contemporary America the source of power is the people, and would have planned his political strategy to please the millions that comprise the democratic electorate. He would have democratized his techniques, and that is just what our own politicians are trying to do.

They are trying to gain understanding of mass psychology, and the successful politician is sometimes a better practical psychologist than the professor of that subject. Both recognize that man is an irrational animal, whose emotions, traditions, and prejudices determine his vote more often than does his reason. The politician is seldom a man whose sense of reality has been dulled by extensive academic education, and can therefore appeal to the irrational in men because he shares it. As Graham Wallas put it: "The art of politics consists largely in the creation of opinion by the deliberate exploitation of subconscious, non-rational inference."

To sway the emotions of the electorate, to deceive or at least not to undeceive the public, to find common denominators for all voters, to divide the opposition: these are techniques of modern democratic politicians. Symbols, slogans, gestures, and music become the tools of their trade. In the use of those tools they are aided by the disseminating powers of radio, cinema, and the expanded press, the tools so effectively used by Hitler and Goebbels, although our own politicians are using them less efficiently and, thank God, more scrupulously. The expert politician and the expert publicity man think in the same terms and speak the same language. They are concerned, among other things, with the arts of charging words and phrases with high emotional potentials, of turning a respectable word into an insult, of clothing an ordinary word in the raiment of popularity. In spite of free public education, emotional symbols sway more voters than logic. Only the amateur politician tries to make people think; the expert tries to make them feel.

There are many examples of how politicians deliberately change the emotional significance of words. As late as 1925, nearly any American would have been pleased to be called a capitalist. In 1945 that word carries opprobrium in many circles, yet our nation operates now, as it did then, under the capitalist system. Now we have the curious situation in which a Democrat like Mr. Henry Wallace proclaims his devotion to free enterprise while continuing to inveigh against capitalists and capitalism!

THERE is no time to speculate upon the interesting emotional history of words like "isolationist," "nationalist," and "liberal." Through politics, the former meanings of these words have been distorted, their emotional content altered, and their respectability greatly diminished. This is political realism with a vengeance. We may deplore it but we cannot ignore it. As a matter of fairness, why should we avert our eyes and our careers from the realism of politicians but respect it in public relations and advertising experts, in modern novelists and in business men? We admire the doctor who treats realistically, without regard to ethics or morals, the biological organism which is his patient. We even expect a doctor to prolong if possible the life of a criminal or a degenerate. The politician deals realistically with another amoral functioning organism: the body politic. Why praise the doctor and condemn the politician? Each serves man or masses of men on a basis other than his idealism; but the doctor has one advantage: even if his patient dies he gets his fee. Only if his party wins can the politician hope for personal reward.

A democracy could not function without politicians, for citizens of a democracy frequently disagree. When they do there are but two solutions. One is for the majority to force its full will upon a reluctant and perhaps powerful minority. If this is done too often, national unity is endangered. The other way is to compromise, and democracy is essentially a government by compromise. Politicians make compromise possible. It is not always an attractive process, and often seems to represent a departure from fixed high principles—a plea here and a message there, a discreet suggestion, a bit of log-rolling, an equivocal device, a dubious favor granted, and a half-implied

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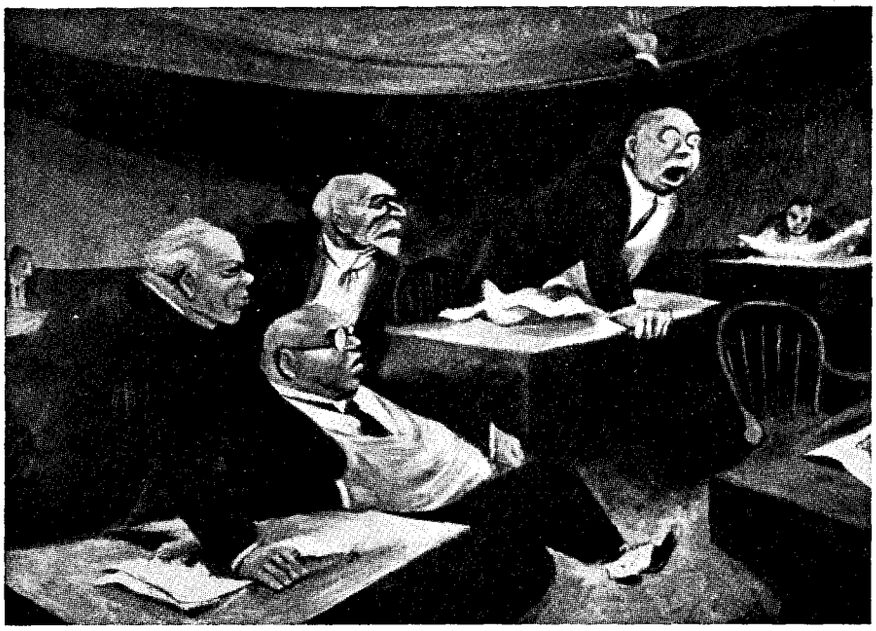

—From "Painting in the U. S. A."

"Upper House," by William Gropper.

threat delivered, until a formula is found. But formulae must be found, and they are not forged by statesmen who stand firm and unswerving upon their ethical principles. Either such statesmen temporarily retire from the bright light of public esteem to effect their compromises, or they send their political supporters into the back room to negotiate for them with the opposition.

In fact, politicians are the domestic servants who do the nation's political housekeeping. They perform the daily chores which the average citizen ignores and does not even understand. They create and maintain the organism of political parties essential to democratic government. Who else would see that candidates were nominated according to the law, that primary elections were held, that watchers were selected for the polls, that funds were collected to maintain the cost of this democratic machinery? Who else would select and present the issues of an election (not perhaps as you and I might wish those issues to be selected and presented, but better than you and I would do it without them)? These domestic workers may be inefficient, neglecting to dust the corners of our political house, and occasionally taking a nip of the master's sherry, but could we do without them?

Professional politicians find the amateur candidate an embarrassment. The man who has gained his nomination through other than party channels is likely to have the amateur's impatience with established party aims and procedures. The case of Wendell Willkie is a striking example. He was not the choice of the party regulars for the Republican Presidential nomination in 1940, but once he had gained the party nomination he also acquired some obligation to consider the advice and interests of leaders of the party. This he was apparently unwilling to do, and his decision, right or wrong, was at least based upon a reasonable theory.

Mr. Willkie had been nominated by enthusiastic amateurs. His appeal to them had been his independence, his originality, his courage, and his refusal to accept dictation from anyone. He believed that those qualities, further emphasized, would win the election. They would, he thought, secure the votes of independents, while regular Republicans would vote for him anyhow, as the party nominee. In this the party leaders did not agree. Perhaps they were right, but in any case Mr. Willkie was not the kind of leopard who could change the smallest of his spots. Mr. Willkie—nothing if not independent—was also determined to make no pledges to appoint any individual to any office. This was admirable idealism, but certainly unpalatable to the politicians of his party. To them it was evidence of Mr. Willkie's lack of realism; indeed they felt it to be almost insulting to the party that was supporting him. It meant that he was putting himself above the party, and to politicians there is no more heinous sin. In doing so he stood in strong contrast to the regular party politician, who often sacrifices the chance for personal advancement in the interests of party unity. Striking examples of this attitude can be found in the actions of James A. Farley, James Byrnes, and Robert Taft.

Political power centers about patronage. Political plums are all that politicians have to offer to party workers who have loyally supported their leaders through the lean periods of defeat. Those plums vary from the large and luscious ones of cabinet posts to the smaller and greener ones of local postmasterships and tax assessorships. A party that does not give patronage commits political suicide. Any man who believes in the two-party system must accept the theory of patronage as unpalatable but necessary food upon which the party must live. Small wonder that independent candidates like Mr. Willkie are embraced with hesitation and supported with reluctance by party politicians!

The party which first makes easier the entrance of able young men into politics will strengthen its position. Although new recruits to the party organization are welcomed in theory, they are often repelled in practice. The traditional procedure for a youthful novice is to start with the domestic drudgery of a local political organization and work his way up through a series of minor elective offices. In practice this procedure seems to the ambitious young man (who is likely to be in a hurry) to be unduly slow, unduly boring, extremely uncertain, and completely disillusioning. After discovering the system, many young college graduates with their own way to make decide that they cannot afford to pay the price for the political activity they sincerely desire. Many promising recruits, who might have helped elevate the standards of the local organization, are thus lost to the party.

THIS system stands in strong contrast to the encouragement given by English political parties to the young graduate of Oxford or Cambridge. Immediately upon graduation he is welcomed into the party, given a type of work commensurate with his ability and training, and often has opportunity to discuss party strategy with leading statesmen.

A very distinguished Englishman who had been often in America on government missions once remarked to me in substance:

> I would not advise an able young countryman of yours to enter politics by the traditional American method. It is too uncertain and too expensive in time and ideals. I should advise him to ignore politics at first and make or marry money. Then let him contribute generously to the campaign fund of the party most likely to win, and with good management he should gain a cabinet post, an ambassador-

(*Continued on page* 60)

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GEO-METRIC VERSE

Poetry Forms in Mathematics

Written Mostly for Fanatics

by

Gerald Lynton Kaufman

SQUARODY

THE SQUARODY'S UNIQUE REFINEMENT
IS SELF-COMPLETE, WITHOUT A SEQUEL.
ITS SIDES ARE PLANE-LY IN ALIGNMENT,
ITS TWO DI-AG-ON-ALS ARE EQUAL.
ITS VERSIFORM MUST BE A LIGHT ONE
WITH QUATRAINS PLEASING TO THE MUSES
SO EVERY ANGLE SEEMS A RIGHT ONE
TO FIT WITH THE HY-POTH-E-NU-SES.
THUS EDITORS WHOSE WITS ARE WITH 'EM
MAY HONOR IT WITH PRAISE ECSTATIC,
ALTHOUGH ITS MON-O-LOG-A-RHYTHM
IS SOMEWHAT LULL-A-BY-QUADRATIC.

RONDEAU-VAL

AN OVAL IS NOT AN ELLIPSE.
A RONDEAU IS FAR FROM A SONNET, BUT MANY A POET
MAKES SLIPS - WHEN TRYING HIS TALENT UPON IT. A RONDEAU
HAS ROND-OVAL FORM, WHENEVER IT LOOKS LIKE AN EGG, BUT IF YOU
COMPOSE ONE, I BEG, REMEMBER ITS LOWER PART DIPS, COMPLETING AN
OVULAR NORM - LIKE SECTIONS OF ROUND-BOTTOM SHIPS OR CORPULENT
FEMININE HIPS - AN OVAL IS NOT AN ELLIPSE.

IAMBICYLINDER

IAMBIC VERSE, AS DOUBTLESS YOU RECALL
HAS FEET WHEREON THE ACCENTS ALWAYS FALL
THE SYLLABLES, RECURRING SHORT AND LONG
RESOLVE THE MEASURED TEMPO OF ITS SONG
THE CYLINDER TAKES MEASURES ALL ITS OWN
IN FEET OR INCHES, OR IN SCALES UNKNOWN
BUT WHETHER SHORT OR LONG, OR LOW OR HIGH
ITS VOLUME IS EXPRESSED IN TERMS OF PI
IAMBIC CYLINDERS ARE SELDOM FOUND
BECAUSE THEIR MUSIC GOES AROUND AND ROUND
SO PUBLISHERS WHO READ THEM NEVER KNOW
WHAT'S PRINTED ON THE SIDE THAT DOESN'T SHOW

TOPPERATIC

IN DAYS OF OLD, THE OPERA HAT
DISTINGUISHED THE ARISTOCRAT
IT USED TO BE THE CROWNING GRACE
TO COUNTERACT HIS FROWNING FACE
AND WAS DESIGNED FOR FOLDING FLAT
BENEATH THE SEAT ON WHICH HE SAT
ITS DUAL PURPOSE SOME CONTEND
WAS FOR PROTECTING EITHER END
TODAY THIS HAT IS SELDOM PROPER
TO FIT WITH THE PATRICIAN'S HABITS
THE MODERN USAGE OF A "TOPPER"
IS MOSTLY FOR MAGICIANS' RABBITS

SHORT PANTOUM

THE ENGLISH PANTOUM OR MALAYAN PANTUN
IN STANZAS REPEATING A CATCHY REFRAIN
IS SAID TO BE BASED ON THE RIDDLE OR PUN
WITH INTRICATE RHYMING TO BAFFLE THE BRAIN

IN STANZAS REPEATING A CATCHY REFRAIN
THE CLASSICAL POET HIS TALENT DISPORTS
INTRIGUING HIS READERS AGAIN AND AGAIN
WITH SUBTLE EXPRESSIONS OR FANCIFUL THOUGHTS

THE CLASSICAL POET HIS TALENT DISPORTS
IN LENGTHY SYLLABICS PROTRACTEDLY SPUN
BUT MANY AN EDITOR LIKES THEM IN SHORTS
WITH VERSIFICATION PORTRAYING IN FUN
THE ENGLISH PANTOUM OR MALAYAN PANTUN

PARA-BALLADE

A BALLADE
SHOULD BE COMPOSED
SO ITS VERSES ENTERTAIN,
BY THE SENTIMENTS DISCLOSED
IN THE DEPTH OF THE REFRAIN.
POETS FURTHERMORE MAINTAIN
THAT CORRECT BALLADE-DESIGNS
SHOULD BE FASHIONED TO SUSTAIN
FULLY EIGHT-AND-TWENTY LINES;
HENCE I DOUBTLESS SHOULD EXPLAIN
THAT THE "PARA"-FORM HERE SHOWN
HAS BEEN SHORTENED TO CONTAIN
JUST ONE THOUGHT AND ONE ALONE:
FRANCOIS VILLON! NOTE AGAIN
ALL THE THINGS YOU SAY YOU'VE KNOWN
ADD THE RHYTHM OF A PLANE, CUT OBLIQUELY THRU A CONE!

SPHERE-RONDEAU

TO FORM A RONDEAU
ON A SPHERE, ONE HAS TO BE
A TRIFLE QUEER. TO KEEP THE METRE
SOFT AND LIGHT, WITH ALL THE SUBTLETIES
IN SIGHT, REQUIRES ONE TO PERSEVERE
DESIGNING LIKE AN ENGINEER, THE WORDS
THAT GREET THE EYE AND EAR, ARRANGING
THE ALIGNMENT RIGHT, TO FORM A RONDEAU
ROLLING CLEAR AROUND A RHYTHMIC HEMISPHERE
THE VERSES HERE ARE SOMETHING NEAR
(ALTHOUGH ADMITTEDLY NOT QUITE)
WHAT AUSTIN DOBSON USED TO WRITE:
TO FORM A RONDEAU

KEATSODE

I BOUGHT A GRECIAN URN ONE DAY.
BUT SAD TO SAY, I COULD NOT PAY
MY CREDITOR IN CASH
HOWEVER, HE WAS RASH
AND SAID HE WOULDN'T MIND
MY PAYMENTS, MADE IN KIND.
SO, CONSCIOUS OF AN EMPTY PURSE,
I THOUGHT HE MEANT A KIND OF VERSE.
THE WORDS OF KEATS I THEN RECALLED
IN HOPE HE MIGHT BECOME ENTHRALLED
WITH SOMETHING SIMILAR OF MINE
MADE IN A VERSI-FORM DESIGN
AND SHOW NO MORE CONCERN!
BUT SINCE HE HASN'T YET
FORGIVEN ME THIS DEBT
I WAGER HE WILL LEARN
TO BEAR THE LOAD
OF WHAT IS OWED
UPON A GRECIAN URN

OBLONGFELLOW

LIVES OF ARCHITECTS REMIND US
WE COULD MAKE OUR LIVES SUBLIME
IF WE PLANNED TO LEAVE BEHIND US
BLUEPRINTS ON THE SANDS OF TIME

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Violent Therapy of Disaster

THE GREAT SNOW. By Henry Morton Robinson. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1947. 277 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by WALTER HAVIGHURST

IN the Age of Foreboding, in which we live, came a snowstorm, gradual, silent, beautiful as it softened the silhouette of New York and whitened the hills above the Hudson. In that trance-like stillness it continued for twenty days, until thirty feet of snow had fallen. Fog sweeping in from the Atlantic encountered a cold air mass from the Northwest, and the long snow fell.

Mr. Robinson's haunting story tells how one man left the city for a weekend at his home at Rhinecliff and there, through three weeks of siege, fought for his own and his family's survival. The great snow tested his courage, his resourcefulness, his reason for being. He met one trial after another. He trampled a path to a snow-buried oil truck and kept his furnace going—till the electric current failed. He made a perilous, exulting trip in an open motor dinghy sixty miles up the ice-clogged Hudson to rescue his daughter from the milling crowd in the Albany railroad station. He fought cold and darkness and the disease that entered his once warm, secure, well-lighted Georgian mansion.

There is left in us, in the Age of Foreboding, a capacity for combat with the elements. In the word "snowbound" still rings a faint, primal excitement, like an echo out of a cave. This story has that reality, along with some others less simple. There is the laying bare of human tensions and relationships in the course of siege. There are subtle cross-currents of personality, intensified by suffering and danger. The novel shows a variety of characters in crises of action and thought.

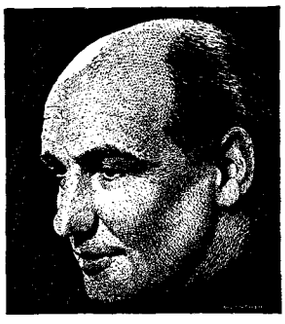
But it wasn't for this that Mr. Robinson wrote "The Great Snow." He had another story to tell, about the sickness of society and its uncertain relation to nature. This is not a novel that strains at abstractions. It is quiet, firm, deliberate, and controlled. But it is earnest as a winter twilight, and while you are reading it you carry a burdened sense of our plight and our peril.

This sort of thing is fiction's business, and a novelist like Mr. Robinson finds his own way to carry it forward. The way in "The Great Snow" is to tell the story of Ruston Cobb's household, and to let us know, by degrees, that it also is the story of our time. The two stories move together, steadily gaining momentum and meaning, as a man first relishes the security of his house in time of storm, then rises to the threat against it, finally is overwhelmed with grief, humility, and compassion.

There are many symbols in this novel, which begins with Ruston Cobb's studying the blueprints of a light-shattering device for the War Department and ends with the deliverance brought by the melting March sun. The besieged household at Rhinecliff includes all human relationships—parent and child, husband and wife, lover and mistress, employer and servant. Among the nine people acting out this drama (I kept seeing it on the stage, and still do) are varied temperaments, capacities, and beliefs. There is the head of the house, Ruston Cobb, man of affairs, feeling like the captain of a great stricken liner; there are Edward Laimbeer, the painter whose powers have atrophied during the Age of Foreboding, Nolla Ruston, the neurotic wife, her sister Beryl, driven by hungers she cannot satisfy, the sturdy daughter, and the frail, mother-smothered son, and the servants who rely upon instincts that the others do not possess. In these people the crisis reveals old tensions and develops new ones, and by its drastic therapy the storm acts upon a power beneath consciousness to assert their will to live. Into this analysis of the forces that gnaw and the forces that nourish comes one symbol that seems strained and obtrusive. The injured hawk, blown into the house and kept captive while Cobb and his groundskeeper try to tame it, repeats a conception, already clearly present in the book, of man's attempt to subdue and enslave nature. This episode adds a preoccupation unlikely to a man with as many responsibilities as Cobb had to carry during the storm, and it strains the character of Rollefson, the ex-seaman, who somewhat unnaturally recalls from his Norwegian boyhood the lore of falconry.

The larger symbolism is inherent in the story, how the violent therapy of disaster awakens the will to live. But it is an unchanged society that emerges out of the storm, one not cleansed or humbled, and it is evidence of the force of Mr. Robinson's indictment that a reader cannot fully share Ruston Cobb's belief in the novel's final paragraph.

Walter Havighurst, Miami University English professor and lecturer at Breadloaf and Indiana Writers Conferences, was special OWI writer during World War I. Since 1935 *he has authored seven books and compiled two, the latest being "Masters of the Modern Short Story."*



THE AUTHOR: Henry Morton Robinson's conversation is like a glissando over the universe, sweeping brilliantly from spicy anecdotes about artists' life in Woodstock, N. Y., his home for twenty years, to debates on belles lettres, metaphysics, psychology, or sports. Still an expert rifleman, he doesn't do much big game hunting any more; but when the fancy overtakes him that he is descended from Leif Ericson (with Irish mutations), he navigates small, open boats on frequently dangerous voyages. Sally Rand heard about his falconry and ordered hawks for a rather unique dance she contemplated. "I explained," he says, "that falcons are carnivorous creatures and might nip her. I advised her to stick to fans." Although of epicurean tastes, he lives simply, without formality. Guests take over the Robinson home confident they won't inhibit their host's early retirement. Divination with occult medieval Tarot cards fascinates him, but he's no card-table virtuoso. He took chess lessons from American champion Frank Marshall hoping to beat his three chess-playing children, but didn't. At Columbia, where he matriculated and was English instructor, a French verse form he specialized in gave him an enduring nickname—Rondo. From editorship of *Contemporary Verse* he turned to more remunerative free-lance articles and short stories. To three poetry books he added several non-fiction works and the collaboration "A Skeleton Key to Finnegans Wake." His first novel, "The Perfect Round," was symbolic, as is "The Great Snow," Sophocles's Oedipus-Jocasta tragedy in modern terms. Next comes "The Cardinal," fiction of a young priest's rise through the Church's hierarchy. He writes daily from 8:30 to 4, partly for *The Reader's Digest* as roving editor. "This engine," says Mr. Robinson, "runs on coffee and water."

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Among the New Spring Novels

Ugly Duckling

MARY HALLAM. By Susan Ertz. New York: Harper & Bros. 1947. 265 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by CATHERINE M. BROWN

THE torment and the loneliness of misunderstood youth comes up for the count once more in this novel. In this case not only is the girl in question unlovely, unwanted, physically frustrated, but her vital talent has been forever stilled. Due to a taxi accident, the right hand has been squashed so that the piano, which was truly Mary Hallam's communion, is denied her. In despair and bitterness she turns to dreams of love.

The curtain rises in April 1939, in an apprehensive London, and falls on Mary's final fulfilment as victory in Europe approaches. The people of Britain have, as we reverently realize, met the test and few have flinched. The very stature of war precludes the maintenance of a spiritual status quo. People either soar or are found wanting. Reactions can be predicted when we know our people. Letty, Mary Hallam's chic, selfish stepmother, could only use the crisis as a means of long desired escape. Her good American friend, Maud, would naturally rally in a uniform of service. Mary and her Yorkshire husband, Alan Garstin, must take what comes, while Letty's own children join the forces. There is a consistency of behavior in tumult as there is in tranquillity.

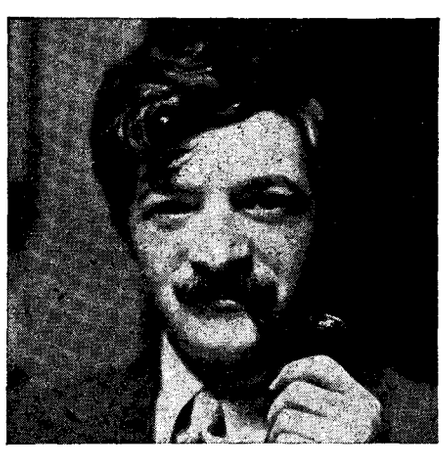
The events preceding this finale are varied, rambling, melodramatic, and cluttered with so many characters as to form a kaleidoscope of personalities. Surely some of these supernumeraries could be tossed overboard without affecting the ballast. Simplicity of treatment and detail would make the problem more poignant. As it is, we tend to lose sight of Mary's quest in a maze of action. Nelson Hallam, rich, muddling, and well-intentioned, tries again and again to break down the hate existing between his wife and daughter. Eager for Mary's marriage, he brings home Ferdinand Walsh who arouses the innocent girl to love. Believing his casual kiss to be a pledge, she is heartbroken to discover he is Letty's lover. A way out of this hated house presents itself in a trip to Paris with Maud. Here Mary runs afoul of a polished old lecher. This time she flees alone to Brittany, tries suicide, is shown the way to contentment by a rugged engineer, and ends up in an English country cottage as his wife and nurse to his childlike mother. The secret of living is surely selflessness. First, learn to serve one's family; then, perforce, one's country.

Miss Ertz has written a serviceable enough story, but has given the semblance rather than essence of despair.

Sectarian Document

THE JUDAS TIME. By Isidor Schneider. New York: The Dial Press. 1947. 361 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by NATHAN L. ROTHMAN



THIS is very plainly a sectarian document. Its one aim is to psychoanalyze a Trotskyite from the point of view of a faithful Communist. The point is made in a prologue which gives some account of the activities of Judas; and in the following narrative of Calvin Cain (there is some symbolism there too), a Communist who breaks away from the fold and joins the Trotskyite splinter of the Party, the parallel is emphasized tirelessly, with Judas coming off quite the more civilized and delicate character. The portrait of Cain is a violent, gory, and diseased thing, and quite evidently done with partisan fury. It is, to that extent, valueless, and I write this with no sympathy for either side. I remember Mr. Schneider, in his previous books, as a poet and literary artist of distinction. I am sorry to see him turning out a forced and disputatious novel of this sort, which depends for its whole validity upon a straw man built up just so that he may be knocked down with triumphant cries.

Calvin Cain is a straw man not because his career is incredible (as a matter of fact he may be accepted as a composite of several actual and celebrated apostates), but because he has been, in these pages, cut, molded, animated, and ventriloquized solely for the illustration of a premise which is, far beyond himself, the hero of the book. The premise is: that a man could not be sane and reasonable and at the same time find fault with the procedures of the Communist Party; that, therefore, any man who finds such fault is necessarily a psychopathic egotist—and, to complete the circle, should he actually sever himself from the Party he must naturally become a maniacal informer and murderer. Thus Calvin Cain works out the details of his ordained destiny: a liberal professor who has joined the Party, become dissatisfied with its workings, and maneuvered himself out of it. From that time on his active rage is transferred from the capitalist society to the Communist Party, and he devotes himself to destroying it with every means at his disposal. This means alignment with the Trotskyites, and a mission to Moscow in their behalf to see if he can contact a counter-revolutionary underground there. He fails miserably and returns in a state of mental disorder. Back in New York, his activities now center upon his former friends, and he is instrumental in supplying the FBI and the Dies Committee with information against many of his old associates. His treachery results in the suicide of one of his friends, the economic ruin of another, but these things only feed his fury. He is permanently engaged now in playing out his Judas role.

As a single portrait of personal and spiritual degeneration, the figure of Calvin Cain possesses a certain clinical interest; as a definitive prototype of what divergence from party discipline *must* be, it is on the face of it false. On the face of it, that is, if you believe that a personal conscience may be a healthy thing. The argument rests there. Mr. Schneider has set up his Calvin Cain as a demonstration of the evils of that kind of

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conscience in a strong authoritative set-up, as opposed to the virtue of such a man as Jack Burrell, the stalwart and undeviating Party Man with a sliding scale of others between, shading from black to white, depending upon conformity. You accept his premise, and the book rings true. You ask some such question as: Couldn't a man leave the Party with the same freedom of will with which he joined it, and remain pretty much the same man?—and the whole contrived structure echoes in answer.

Island of Democracy

BLACK FOUNTAINS. By Oswald Wynd. New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc. 1947. 374 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by R. L. NORTH

OSWALD WYND was born in Tokyo and educated in Japan up to his eighteenth year. The news he brings us now from that defeated island is therefore considerably enhanced in value; not that some of this has not reached us before now, but that it proceeds out of an intimate and essentially sympathetic knowledge of the Japanese character. Was it Emerson (or Thoreau) who said it is impossible to understand save through love? Mr. Wynd would pass that test—and, too, without being suspect; for he is an Englishman first, of the Scots Guards and the British Intelligence, and more recently of the Japanese prison camps, 1942 to 1945. His love would certainly not be for the Japanese Empire; it would be, and is, for that small nucleus of Japanese people who have always existed inside the empire like a stubborn and all but submerged island of democracy, and who (in his own words) "were capable of maintaining their concepts of human decency and justice and who bore those convictions openly to the very threshold of death."

"Black Fountains" treats of some of these, specifically of Omi Tetsukoshi, daughter of a traditionally faithful family. She returns to Japan after five years of Western education in an American university. That Omi returns in 1938, when Japan is involved in the China "Incident" and is tightening everywhere, girding for the inevitable larger struggle, only accentuates the crisis she must face from the very instant of debarkation. She must return to the feudal position of the Japanese woman. She must put aside every alien notion of personal "liberty," of "free" thinking, of private judgment, which she has assimilated in her American experience. But such notions are not easily put aside.

They create, as Mr. Wynd makes clear, a loyalty greater than national patriotism, to ethical abstractions which are a kind of international tender: the individual is the unit and will stand against the state. It is nothing less than that. And then Omi finds herself aligned, quite without plan, quite inevitably, against her family and her class. There are others with her—Lady Kamaibashi, a noble friend who has claims to relationships with the godly family itself, and Ishii Sagami, who shares with Omi a brief snatched interval of marital happiness in the shadow of the imminent defeat, and Hiroshima.

They are only a few, their gestures are abortive, they are rendered entirely helpless, as are the two women, or murdered, as is Ishii, by the overwhelming many. The spectacle is, then, of a kind of defeat inside defeat, a double negative—with, also, a double positive casting shadows over the immediate horizon at the book's end. First, the heartening news of liberation coming to the prisoners in the concentration camps, over the radio; a great lifting moment that must have been, the voice with its flat announcement: "We are coming for you. We are on our way. . . ." And second, the very definite assurance that a new Japanese underground of reaction has been formed, long in advance of the expected defeat; that the cells have been planted, the plans made, the tactics arranged and understood, lip-service to democracy decreed until the moment for frank violence may come again. This, in all of its careful ramifications, is laid before us with something of the atmosphere of an OSS story. Its accuracy will have to be tested by someone with more knowledge of Japan than mine. The idea is of course irresistible; would a defeated people neglect this one gambit left to them? So it ends: the fascist underground under the leadership of the fanatical abbot, and inside the coils that nucleus again, the heroic Japanese democrats. It is a picture of further struggle, and a very dim light, that Mr. Wynd offers.

Squandered Devotion

ALWAYS YOUNG AND FAIR. By Conrad Richter. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. 1947. 177 *pp.* $2.

Reviewed by CASSIE MEREDITH

MR. RICHTER'S story, told in the first person by the most ubiquitous member of any Greek chorus, begins with the Spanish-American War. Lucy Markle, rich, exquisite, and gentle, learns of the death in action of her fiance, Tom Grail. Will, his cousin, returns from the war and immediately takes up courtship of Lucy as his main profession. It's a full-time job. The girl turns, half crazed, away from life. Practically papering her walls with pictures of Tom, she yearns for complete isolation. Finally, however, battered by her family, she accepts Will only to refuse him as the wedding guests assemble. Years pass. Will's doglike devotion is only matched by Lucy's absorption with the dead. Time has stopped for her. She wears her ancient dress, her high-buttoned shoes, and goes about rekindling Tom's memory. The sudden realization that she is old, her youth forever gone, while Tom lies forever young, reverses the situation. Like the changes in a square dance, she becomes the pursuer while Will, now a settled veteran of another war, vainly attempts to flee. Gossip, scandal, pitiful attempts to recapture the past ultimately force delayed matrimony. The aged groom's unwilling spirit linked with bodily infirmity proves conclusively that the first of life was not made for the last after all.

Mr. Richter sets his tale in the small Pennsylvania town of Pine

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Mills. Dependent on Philadelphia and Harrisburg for catering and the press, the town is otherwise staunch in its own personality. The stone houses, the golden oak interiors, the lack of any possible anonymity in living are part and parcel of the place. It is a carefully detailed, realistic background for an ailing text.

The period novel should not rely too heavily on nostalgia, accuracy of detail, and exact observation of custom. Characters must be vital enough to inspire some reaction. In the case of "Always Young and Fair," the cast, without any exception, have no real being.

Savage Ancestors

ADAM AND THE SERPENT. By Vardis Fisher. New York: The Vanguard Press. 1947. 335 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by FLETCHER PRATT

THIS volume presents somewhat the same singular spectacle as those never-completed Miami skyscrapers that were turned into twenty-story chicken farms. The plan is noble and spacious, but the hallways of the structure are encumbered by much that is mere filth, the furnishings have never been installed, and the elevators that should lift one briskly from the ground towards the stars are lacking. It is impossible not to admire such a work; it is impossible to give it an entirely clean bill of health.

The story is that of the transition from matriarchy to patriarchy, which is one of the fundamental spiritual movements of pre-civilized man. The author is deeply concerned with the basic issue. His picture of the psychology of the savages who were our ancestors is extremely convincing, both as to word and action. The prophet Dove, and the broken dialogue in which he attempts to make his revelation to a non-comprehending world, the rival witchwives and the surgical operation by which one attempts to let an evil spirit out of her daughter's body, have reality and emotional appeal.

But somewhere along this line one comes to an end of the good things that can be said about the book. There are characters who contribute nothing but to reveal that Mr. Fisher has read Malinowsky on the sexual life of primitive peoples; there are events that serve no purpose but to portray the background, which in any really carefully-worked-out novel should be inherent. Moreover, the significant events are not allowed to lie quiet but are repeated in slightly different form lest their impact should be missed. This combination not only slows up the story but gives the things that do happen to the people that do matter an effect of monotony and triviality.

Worst of all, Mr. Fisher is in such a hurry to make his main point that he never really makes it at all, save in his own direct statement — the author coming out from behind the scenes to dwarf his puppets. As this is one book in a long series, it will presumably have a sequel in which the matter is put more forcefully, just as the present volume furnishes an energetic picture of the matriarchy which its predecessor only intimated; but something is surely owing to the current reader, and one ends by doubting whether so wide a result can have been produced by so insignificant a cause.

American Candide

JEREMY BELL. By Clyde Brion Davis. New York: Rinehart & Co., Inc. 1947. 313 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by N. L. WROTH

MR. DAVIS has written for us now a story of severe, almost deceptive simplicity. For fully half the book there is nothing of any consequence happening, and we are held to it, if we are, by the care and affection with which he builds up his central character, his Jeremy Bell, who contains within his large and healthy frame all of the honest, wholesome, and naïve intelligence which we have always associated, in wishful dream-thinking, with the American man. Jeremy Bell is young Uncle Sam, good and strong and wondering, the American Candide. That is all there is for a hundred and fifty pages—Jeremy in his home town called Dawn's Mill, somewhere in New England at the turn of the century, when the data of life are composed of McKinley, the local baseball team, the Gold Dust twins, the soda cracker barrel, the Sears Roebuck catalogue, the livery stable, the blacksmith shop run by Jeremy's grandfather, the iron stag on the front lawn, the drowsy afternoons in the sun, and Jeremy and his friend Sam wandering free and dreaming in the fields of a Sunday afternoon, planning adventure in the outside world. And then, by the device of turning the coin over, by the employment of sudden dramatic contrast, the book explodes with a startling violence.

For Jeremy and Sam do get away from home. They wander westward a way first, to Chicago, and then sign up to work in a lumber camp in the deep South. That is where the transition is made, sharply, like wading waist-high in a pleasant sea and stepping off a sudden bank into the deep. Their experience in the South makes a nightmare of stark brutality: feudal slavery in a lumber camp, fleeced by the company store and subjugated by the company police, escape and desperate floundering in alien territory, capture, jail, the bludgeon and the threat of the chain-gang, the breakaway, riding the rods, the hopeless circling back to camp. At the end there is the one bitter escape left to them; they enlist in the army and are off to Wyoming, out of the hideous South.

It is a fearful picture, made all the more fearful by the juxtaposition of opposites—the peace and then the ferocity; the democratic free air of Dawn's Mill and then the stifling dungeon-reek of chain-gang Arkansas. The very black-white of it gives it something of a fabulous character, the parable of the Good Man in the Bad Lands.

But this is unhappily the kind of parable that is apt to be a true story. It could be documented with a thousand footnotes. Mr. Davis has told it without the footnotes, simply, intensely, with horror. Like the others of his books that I have read, it has an undisguised vein of ethical iron. It is a preachment on the dangerous ambushments that still threaten democratic man, and nothing could be more contemporary.

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Rebels in the "Bread Basket"

THE WALLACES OF IOWA. By Russell Lord. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1947. 615 pp. $5.

Reviewed by MERLE MILLER

RUSSELL LORD'S biography of the Wallace family does a number of things, most of them extremely well. One of the important facts recalled in "The Three Wallaces" is that there is no validity to the theory so commonly held by the citizens of the Eastern Seaboard of the United States that American liberalism was born, has been nurtured, and always found its most enthusiastic adherents east of the Alleghenies. In tracing the history of the three most famous members of a clan that has become an American dynasty, Mr. Lord has also told the story of an important section of the United States, the Middle West, and of this country's six million farm families.

There is a current, fairly long-lived —and, admittedly, quite often accurate—belief that our occasionally prosperous, usually quiet "bread basket" farmers are old-line, always faithful followers of the Grand Old Party's most traditional ways. In explaining how the three Henry Wallaces happened, Mr. Lord spins out the story of the citizens of a handful of states whose people have, during their relatively short history, sent to Congress some of its most obstreperous and annoying radicals, all the way from "Tama Jim" Wilson to Senator W. Smith Brookhart, to George W. Norris, to the La Follettes, father and son.

Mainly, of course, "The Wallaces of Iowa" deals with a Presbyterian minister, his son, once a professor at the Iowa State Agricultural College at Ames, and the grandson, who was Franklin D. Roosevelt's first Secretary of Agriculture, later Vice President, next Secretary of Commerce, and, finally, an uncomfortable nonconformist in the cabinet of President Harry Truman. Viewed in the perspective so ably revealed by Mr. Lord, Henry Agard Wallace's career becomes completely understandable. After all, he emerged from a family of rebels and non-conformists; otherwise, his ancestor, John Wallace, would never have left North Ireland to settle in the still-barbaric wilds of Pennsylvania; his grandfather, Henry Cantrell, would never, after he left the Presbyterian ministry in Waterloo, Iowa, on a doctor's advice, have become one of the country's most disturbing farm columnists, always baiting the rich and powerful, from the barbed-wire trust to the railroads. And Henry A.'s father would never have launched the always outspoken *Wallace's Farmer*, mainly as an outlet for the aging Henry Cantrell. And, most important, after his father became Secretary of Agriculture in the cabinets of both Warren G. Harding and Calvin Coolidge, the average son would not in 1928 have decided that, lower East Side accent and all, Tammany included, he as a progressive Iowan had to support Democrat Alfred Emanuel Smith rather than Republican Herbert Hoover for the Presidency.

—From the book.

Four Generations of Henry Wallaces

Despite Mr. Lord's carefully documented history of the present Henry Wallace's father and grandfather, most readers of this book will be primarily interested in the man who, as the recently appointed editor of the new *New Republic* weekly magazine, has, even now, a voice which is heard and both honestly respected and roundly damned throughout the world. I found Lord's account of the early New Deal far more illuminating and instructive than either Alden Hatch's recent "fictionalized" biography of the late, great President, or Frances Perkins's personal reminiscences of the Roosevelt era. Despite his close association with the fumbling Agricultural Adjustment Act and the ever-normal granary, Lord is to be commended for his sometimes critical appraisal of the mistakes as well as the victories of an agricultural program which forced many millions of sometimes reluctant farmers into an understanding and use of twentieth-century scientific agricultural methods.

In a kind of last-minute postscript, Lord attempts to tell the story of Henry A.'s break with the Truman Administration and the famous Madison Square Garden speech. Most of the facts of that episode are not yet available. For example, was Harry Truman, as *Time* magazine alleged, telling a "clumsy lie" when he told correspondents he approved Wallace's right to deliver the speech rather than its contents? What did Secretary of State Byrnes teletype the President from Paris? Until these facts are known, the story will not be complete. But Lord's biography does show the forthright honesty with which the current Wallace launched what he calls "the fight for peace." Lord also hints at the undeniable fact that if Henry Agard Wallace loses his battle and war comes, our civilization is over and done with.

There are a number of ways to ignore what the present Henry Wallace says and writes. If one wishes, one can denounce him as an innocent tool of the American Communist Party—if one does not talk to the Communists, that is; or one can condemn his inept and inaccurate criticism of the Baruch Plan for the control of atomic energy; one can question his one-sided worry about American imperialism and his frequent failure to mention the constant expansion of the Soviet Union. One can say that he is a dreamer, meaning that he believes the entire population of the world should be able to have three square meals a day; one can allege that he communes with the stars and speaks several foreign languages. Even Wallace's closest admirers are likely to describe him as "an honest man, but . . . ," placing the greatest emphasis on the word "but."

Russell Lord's sometimes tedious, occasionally over-admiring, but always honest biography of a family that represents this country at its best, proves, however, beyond question, that the present editor of *The New Republic* reaches his conclusions without outside aid, either communion with the stars or the use of puzzling alien tongues, and only after honest intellectual effort. Whether Henry Wallace increases in stature or is recorded as a mere footnote in the history of our turbulent atomic age largely depends on the immediate future of this country and of the world.

Merle Miller founded and edited both the Pacific and Continental editions of Yank. *By the conclusion of the recent war, he was executive editor of all fourteen* Yank *editions. Prior to hostilities he was Washington correspondent for the* Philadelphia Record. *He is author of "Island 49" and co-author with Abe Spitzer of "We Dropped the A-Bomb."*

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Peace Through U.S. World Empire?

THE STRUGGLE FOR THE WORLD. By James Burnham. New York: The John Day Co. 1947. 248 pp. $3.

Reviewed by FRANK ALTSCHUL

IN his latest book, James Burnham offers the American public a potent antidote for premature complacency. It would be a mistake to argue that this is no longer needed. The desperate eagerness with which we try to recapture the pattern of a vanished past is evidence enough that we have not yet grasped the true menace of militant communism or the full portent of the atomic bomb. In the escapist world of the movie, the comic strip, and the soap opera, communism and the bomb lose much of their terror. With this escapism Mr. Burnham has no patience. He is not at all sure that disaster either can or will be averted. But he concedes at least an off chance, if we will but face with courage the perilous realities.

Mr. Burnham expounds the danger lurking in militant communism. "The ultimate goal of communist, and therefore of Soviet, policy is the conquest of the world. This is not a surprising or a fresh discovery. It is a secret only to the ignorant or the deceived." If this statement were unsupported, Mr. Burnham might be lightly disposed of as just another red-baiter. But he has assembled a wealth of supporting material, which he presents with devastating logic and telling effect.

The necessities of a coalition war tempted us to indulge in a considerable measure of self-deception. In the beginning, we knew we were merely juggling with words in describing the Soviet Union as a peace-loving democracy. We gave wide currency to this absurd notion, however, conceiving it to be a convenient instrument of total victory. But in the end, we fell under the spell of a myth of our own creating.

> It was thought that communism's revolutionary ideology had degenerated into a pious verbal racket used to help Russia's new rulers stay in power. It was believed that the Soviet Union could be not merely a helpful but a loyal ally in the war, that it would be grateful for assistance received, and that it would honor its pledges. Viewed through the spectacles of this false estimate, Russia was found to be growing more democratic and more normal.

The Soviet Union has contrived to make a revision of this estimate essential. But the process is slow. An agreeable illusion is not easily abandoned. Every agency of propaganda plays upon the human reluctance to come to grips with unpalatable facts. On this account, many will still be unprepared to accept the full implications of Mr. Burnham's dogmatic assertion: "The truth is that you can get along with communism in only one way: by capitulating to it."

But because of the atomic bomb, which constitutes the other perilous reality, we have but a short time in which to come to our senses.

> The existence of atomic weapons prohibits any long postponement of a showdown. The threat of atomic weapons presents the perspective of social annihilation, at the very least for the losers, not in centuries or generations, but on the immediate horizon. . . . If a workable solution for the problem of atomic weapons is not found within a relatively few years, Western civilization will cease to be the dominant civilization of the world (if it does not disappear altogether) . . .

This surely is an uninviting prospect. But nothing will be gained by failing to appraise it objectively. It may still be avoided "if an absolute monopoly in the control of atomic weapons is created." According to Mr. Burnham, this monopoly cannot be created by agreement—it must be imposed. The debates in the Atomic Energy Commission and in the Security Council would seem to lend color to this disheartening view.

It is the author's contention that "within the given time limits, the free and voluntary establishment of a world government is historically impossible." The monopoly which is the prerequisite for salvation can only be attained through "a world empire, for which the historical stage had already been set prior to and independently of the discovery of atomic weapons. The attempt at world empire will be made, and is, in fact, the objective of the Third World War, which, in its preliminary stages, has already begun. It should not require argument to state that the present candidates for leadership in the world empire are only two: the Soviet Union and the United States." Mr. Burnham recognizes that the United States is at best a reluctant candidate:

> The communist power moves toward the climax self-consciously, deliberately. Its leaders understand what is at stake. They have made their choice. All their energies, their resources, their determination, are fixed on the goal. But the Western power gropes and lurches. Few of its leaders even want to understand. Like an adolescent plunged into his first great moral problem, it wishes, above all, to avoid the responsibility for choice. Genuine moral problems are, however, inescapable, and the refusal to make a choice is also a moral decision. . . . No wish or thought of ours can charm this issue away.

A grim analysis prompts Mr. Burnham to develop a positive program of action. In its initial or defensive stage, the objective of United States foreign policy should be "to block communist domination of Eurasia, and to combat . . . infiltration." Because "The Struggle for the World" was published five days after Mr. Truman's address to the joint session of Congress it is interesting to note that it specifically recommends resistance to Soviet pressure in Turkey and in Greece. Possibly we are at last on the eve of reaching a moral decision—of making our choice.

But as Mr. Burnham develops his argument—as he moves from the defensive to the offensive phase—the policy of world empire is transmuted into the "policy of democratic world order." This is not only from our American point of view a more acceptable formulation, but it is a more accurate description of what Mr. Burnham has in mind. For in essence, he seeks the crystallization of unity among the freedom-loving democracies under the leadership of the United States. Whether, once this unity is established, the struggle with the Soviet Union may be liquidated without conflict, he leaves in doubt. But as "there is no alternative to the struggle itself," he finds some virtue in considering "the not unimportant alternative of: Who will win?"

Driven by a sense of urgency, Mr. Burnham concentrates upon the political aspects of foreign policy. Eco-

—*Justus in the* Minneapolis Star.

End of the Act?

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nomic factors, which contribute so greatly to the current unrest, are dealt with briefly and in passing. Mr. Burnham has written a provocative and deeply disturbing book. It conveys no assurance that the policies advocated would bring us either peace or security. It closes on this challenging note:

> It may be that the darkness of great tragedy will bring to a quick end the short, bright history of the United States—for there is enough truth in the dream of the New World to make the action tragic. The United States is called before the rehearsals are completed. Its strength and promise have not been matured by the wisdom of time and suffering. And the summons is for nothing less than the leadership of the world, for that or nothing. If it is reasonable to expect failure, that is only a measure of how great the triumph could be.

Frank Altschul, a banker, is president and director of General American Investors Co. and chairman of the American advisory committee of the Bibliographical Society of England. He is the author of "Let No Wave Engulf Us" published in 1941.

A 5,000-Year Perspective

THE UNITED STATES AND THE NEAR EAST. By E. A. Speiser. Cambridge, Mass.: The Harvard University Press. 1947. 263 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by
WILLIAM LINN WESTERMANN

THIS is the second volume in the series of the American Foreign Policy Library. It is written by Dr. E. A. Speiser of the University of Pennsylvania, a research worker and teacher of acknowledged ability and integrity in the field of ancient Oriental languages and history. The geographic and ethnic knowledge which Dr. Speiser had accumulated in his profession has been supplemented and deepened by his direction of five archeological campaigns in the field, and his control of immediate events as they now transpire in the southwestern corner of Asia has been gained through his war-time activity in connection with the Office of Strategic Services. The result of these divergent approaches to the problems of the Near East is an admirable sketch of the salient historical and political movements arising there, from the earliest literate period to the present. The purpose of the book is to show how the United States is, perhaps reluctantly, but inevitably, being drawn into the whirl of Near Eastern events.

The long range view which Dr. Speiser has here taken and the scholarly approach are two of the distinctive features of the book. In the perspective of five thousand years the immediate and passionate adherences of this or that religious, national, or economic pressure group seem to fall, almost automatically, into their correct proportion within the larger world setting.

Like any active archeologist, wherever he may have worked, Dr. Speiser has been subjected to interferences and irritations in the conduct of his field campaigns. He has made an obvious effort not to yield to the personal feelings which they have aroused. Nevertheless these irritabilities sometimes appear. He resents, for example, the attitude of King Ibn Saud, "a fanatical and autocratic king," who has not permitted American archeologists bearing the wrong religious credentials to enter his territory. On the whole, however, objectivity and balance, successfully maintained, are the strongest features of Speiser's survey.

The author includes in the term "Near East," as it is used in his detailed discussions of the problems of his area, the Semitic block of peoples in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Transjordania, and the Arabian peninsula as a whole. To this he adds only the teeming population of Egypt, which is Arab in speech, but ethnically non-Arab. In his projection of Zionism and the problems which it has created in a troubled world Dr. Speiser seems to be sympathetic to the movement; but he is in no sense emotionally involved, if, indeed, he actually favors it. Certainly he makes a conscious effort to present the Arab point of view with fairness. He is aware of the unfavorable reaction against the United States created in the Arab states by the inclusion, in 1944, of pro-Zionist planks in the platforms of our two major political parties.

In a book, however, dedicated to the position of the United States in its Near Eastern relations much more space might have been given to the American aspects of the Zionist movement and to its internal, as well as its international, implications and dangers for a fairly large group of our own people.

Dr. Speiser approaches the Arab Near East as representing a highly sensitive barometer of world politics upon which one may foretell the coming storms. In his analysis, this sensitivity seems to express itself as a clash of interests produced by the competition for oil production and oil reserves under British and American combined ownership, as well as the antagonistic struggle between these powers for further concessions. There is no doubt that these antagonisms exist now and that similar difficulties will continue to arise between these two peoples, both within and outside of the area of their economic interests; but these problems should continue to be political solubles, as they have been, particularly in the Near East, up to the present time. To regard them as primary sources of political danger is to fail to recognize the value of the reciprocal give-and-take which has characterized American-British relations for over a hundred years. We compromise issues before a clash comes. This fact is one of the outstanding and happy features of international relations of the past century.

Dr. Speiser concludes his survey with an extraordinarily timely plea for the development and application of a definite American policy in the Near East. We would, of course, desire this to be a well-informed one. He also hopes that it may be an independent policy, determined by American self-interest, neither "British-sponsored nor British-approved." Why, however, should our Department of State not take advantage of British political wisdom gained by their long experience of the past?

Outside of this major objection Dr. Speiser's survey of the Near East may be read with trust and confidence in the facts as presented. Its opinions, also, are always worthy of consideration, because they are well-informed and honest convictions, honestly stated.

William Linn Westermann is professor of ancient history at Columbia University. After the First World War he was chief of the Western Asia (Turkish) Division of the American commission to negotiate peace at Paris.

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An Eloquent American Testament

MY AMERICAN PILGRIMAGE. By Stoyan Christowe. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1947. 264 pp. $2.50.

Reviewed by HAL BORLAND

STOYAN CHRISTOWE calls this book "My American Pilgrimage," but it is more than a pilgrimage; it is an American testament, a warm, simple, eloquent testament of faith and belief and discovery. It is a book which those who have faith and belief of their own will read and cherish; and they will wish that those of little faith and thin belief might read it and come to understanding.

It is the story of a man's coming of age, physically and emotionally, over a period of five years. Christowe came to America from Macedonia with his father when he was a lad of seventeen who knew no English but wanted to learn the language, the country, the people, the philosophy, wanted to find himself. His father had come here to work, to save enough money so that he might return to his native land and spend his last years in ease. To the father, America was work and dollars. Its people, its language, its way of life, remained strange to him to the end. To the son, American life was a limitless discovery; he found here the dream that is the rightful heritage of youth and should be the fulfilment of maturity.

St. Louis was the city of his American beginnings. The men of the Macedonian colony there worked in the railroad terminal and lived in grubby tenement flats. To most of them, as to the elder Christowe, America was work and dollars. But to a few, as to Paskal who ran the coffee house where the Macedonians gathered to talk, America was something more. Stoyan sensed this something more, knew that he must find it, make it his own. He went to night school. He bought store clothes. He dreamed, even when the older men around him scoffed. And now and then he found others who also dreamed.

Stoyan worked in a can factory, and in the railroad terminal, and in a cafeteria. He was baptized in the Mississippi by a Negro preacher; and this is one of the most moving scenes I've read in many months: his wondering belief that he is being baptized an American, not a member of some religious sect, is recorded with a touching warmth of simplicity.

When he went to Montana with a crew of Macedonians to rebuild track for the Great Northern, he began to comprehend the sweep and majesty of America. He began to make America his own land. He discovered Whitman and Emerson. And he discovered life, and death, and meanings. His father died, still bewildered by this land, and the last of the old ties was gone.

For five years Stoyan Christowe worked and sought and changed and grew. And finally he could say:

> From the niches in the hallway of my memory haiduks and comitadjis stepped down to make room for Paul Bunyan, Buffalo Bill, Jesse James, General Custer. . . . The new was so much bigger than the old that there was no equal displacement. America was bigger than what she displaced. And so she elbowed about, pushing out barriers, to make room for her great size. The vast plain, even, was no longer vast enough to contain my desires. There came then the hunger and the thirst for an America that I could not bind with a band of steel, or nail down with a spike.

He was on his way. He knew the reason for his quest.

Throughout the book is this simple sense of wonder, of hope, of belief. Christowe has the perspective and the understanding to see and catch the intangibles of America as well as the land itself. In those early years he was looking, always looking, for the meanings that were bound up in words; and when he found the meanings of words, he found the meaning of ideas. It was not only a new and marvelous language, but a new and challenging philosophy which that language expressed.

Stoyan Christowe "has the perspective and the understanding to see and catch the intangibles of America."

There is no maudlin sentimentality here, no glib glorification of externals. Christowe cuts through the veneer, in his writing as in his thinking.

Hal Borland, author of the famous nature editorials in The New York Times, *has been reporting the American scene for twenty-five years as magazine writer, poet, essayist, and fictionist. His latest book is "An American Year."*

Freedom—a Universal

NATURE AND MAN. By Paul Weiss. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1947. 267 pp. $3.50.

Reviewed by ROBERT BIERSTEDT

POPE, Arbuthnot, and Gay used to twit the philosophers of their day with the tale of a sock. If you darn a sock often enough there will come a time when not a single one of the original threads remains. Is it then the same sock? And what do you mean by "same"? This problem of identity is one of the central problems of philosophy, and one which the author of this book tries to solve with particular reference to the self. His book is the first of a group of three volumes, the first two of which are to be called "The Foundations of Ethics," and the third of which is to be devoted to politics. Each, however, stands as an independent work and can be considered on its own merits. In reviewing this one, therefore, we must warn the unwary that it is pure metaphysics and that metaphysics has been defined both as an unusually persistent attempt to think clearly and as an unusually obstinate attempt to think confusedly. Without applying either of these definitions to the present volume one is yet bound to say that the argument presupposes an intimate and technical knowledge of philosophy, a knowledge that is doctrinal rather than biographical or merely historical. To the reader without this equipment Mr. Weiss will appear somewhat like Tolstoy's deaf man, muttering answers to questions which no one has asked him.

The metaphysician who is true to his calling, however, has to deal with fundamental matters and, as the author says, to express "in sophisticated prose truths open only to innocence." The subjects to which Mr. Weiss turns his attention, therefore, fall under two large rubrics, "Causation and Freedom" and "The Psyche and the Self," and include such things as cause, effect, necessity, freedom, activity, beings (their insides and outsides), concern, spontaneity, grace, evolution, consciousness, body, mind, man, self, signs, language, techniques, habits, emotions, desire, the will, and others—all in fewer than three hundred pages.

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He probes into their nature with the intent to prove that freedom is a basic fact in the universe, a fact which extends beyond the domain of ethics and helps to explain why all things have come to be.

Now pure philosophy is so important that one would like to greet all of the products of its practitioners with applause. Such a response in the present instance, however, will have to be withheld. For it is a strange world which Mr. Weiss has constructed for us, a world replete with paradoxes and full of anfractuosities. It is a world in which everything a man does is caused and in which he is yet free, in which "the course by which an effect comes about is a free occurrence whose outcome is necessary," in which "all beings are something from the outside and on the outside, on the inside and from the inside." It is a world in which "living beings come from non-living ones in myriads every day," in which sensations are not communicated by nerves but in which the surgeon's knife can "reach" a habit, in which a self is more than a mind and body, and a man is more than a self, and in which the emotions (except love) testify that the mind or body or both are functioning improperly. It is finally a world in which butter has privacy, in which acorns acquire habits, in which trees are advised to avoid the axe or to react antagonistically to it, and in which human hearts have to learn to beat.

It would obviously take another book to comment upon these propositions. We may say, however, that the treatment of the two central problems—causation and the identity of the self—seems inconclusive and somewhat less than satisfactory. The imputation of freedom to inanimate objects and sub-human animals is done, apparently, with the desire to salvage the freedom of man without taking him out of the natural world, and accounts for the almost fantastic character of some of the statements. More serious than metaphysical fantasy, however, is the danger to which philosophers are always exposed when they wander about unbidden in areas like psychology, physiology, embryology, and biology, making observations which confound conclusions derived from scientific evidence. Metaphysicians surely have the privilege of viewing conventional things in unconventional ways, but when they become too unconventional, when it requires a trained tolerance and some scientific innocence to read their works, they invite suspicion of themselves and put philosophy in ill repute—"from the outside and on the outside, on the inside and from the inside."

Beloved Giant

GEORGE ADE. By Fred C. Kelly. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co. 1947. 267 pp. $3.50.

Reviewed by JACK IAMS

THE figure that emerges from this book is the figure of a giant, a giant of such warmth and simplicity and modesty that it was, and is, all too easy to overlook his stature. This is not to say that George Ade was a prophet without honor, or, for that matter, honored without profit. Far from it. The world loved him and wore its heart on its sleeve. His plays rocked Broadway on its round heels. He was the friend of Presidents. He piled up a fortune and shared it with all comers. His life was, in fact, one of the happiest and most successful that has ever been recorded. As Mr. Kelly sets it down, it was a life into which practically no rain fell.

The biographer tries to give Ade's boyhood the Horatio Alger trappings of poverty, but it still sounds cheerful enough to make any proletarian novelist curl his lip. Ade hit Chicago journalism in a joyous era and he hit it with a bang. Within six years, his stories were famous and winning plaudits from William Dean Howells and Hamlin Garland. Within ten, "Fables in Slang" was a by-word. Before he was forty, he had had half a dozen musical comedies and plays produced, including "The Sultan of Sulu," "The County Chairman," and "The College Widow," all dazzling successes. He began to travel, ranging a world that was strictly his oyster and loving it. When he finally settled down, more or less, at his fabulous Hazelden estate, he proceeded to throw such immense and merry parties as would have made Lucullus look like a tearoom proprietor. For a children's picnic of eight hundred, he imported a famous clown, a ventriloquist, a Punch-and-Judy show, an organ grinder, a magician, a tramp juggler, a team of acrobats, and a balloonist. William Howard Taft opened his Presidential campaign there with fireworks, bands, circus seats, haywagons, and "twenty acres of buggies." (Today we have Senator Bob—*O tempora, O mores!*) Old age crept up on George Ade like old wine, in a golden haze of friendship, serenity, wisdom, and generosity. Death waited until he was seventy-eight, and then came gently.

"Old age crept up on George Ade like old wine."

Mr. Kelly has prudently permitted Ade to tell as much of his own sunlit story as could be culled from "articles, books, speeches, unpublished manuscripts and letters," uncluttered by footnotes or documentation. The result comes agreeably close to being a series of mellow reminiscences, with explanatory asides.

In these passages we meet an Ade of whom I, for one, have been all too ignorant. The hyphens and capital letters of the "Fables" are absent, and it becomes clear that Ade himself regretted these trademarks as well as the label of "slang." Actually, there is very little slang in Ade's writing, even in the "Fables." Graceful colloquialism was his medium, as it was Mark Twain's before him, and is E. B. White's today.

It is Biographer Kelly's misfortune that his own prose suffers like nobody's business from juxtaposition with Ade's. True, he has to cope with the mundane facts, the names and the dates and the backgrounds, while Ade has only to ramble. But the sad fact is that Mr. Kelly writes so laboriously and monotonously as to give the impression that, however much he loved his subject, the actual composition was a burden to him. Another source of irritation lies in the Pollyanna approach. God knows I am not asking for lurid revelations—Ade's innate goodness would shine like a light through any hanky-panky — but it does seem a pity that Mr. Kelly paints his rollicking Chicago newspapermen as if they drank nothing stronger than sarsaparilla and Ade took that only to be sociable.

But these are faults that are far outweighed by the man whose own words bring him to life in these pages. Ade once paid this tribute to his parents: "My father and mother were what they were, which was plenty good enough for this speckled world." That goes for their boy, George, and in spades.

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I DREAMT I WAS MR. ROCKEFELLER

I DREAMT the other night that I was Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. I dreamt that as Mr. Rockefeller I had just returned from a short but uneasy walk around the section east of the Grand Central district in New York City which I had donated to the United Nations as a site for its headquarters. As I wandered along the East River waterfront, my mind was filled with apprehension over recent events and over the future of the organization which was to be housed in this area. All the way home, I struggled with an important decision I had to make. By the time I reached my door, my mind was made up. I went to my library, took out stationery, and wrote the following letter:

The Assembly
and Security Council
The United Nations
Lake Success, N. Y.

Gentlemen:

I have decided to ask for the return of my grant.

I am referring to the area along the East River in New York City as the site for a permanent home for the United Nations.

Please bear with me while I attempt to explain, as directly and fully as I can, the reason behind what must appear to you to be an altogether unreasonable and bewildering decision. I have made this decision only after the widest possible consideration as to what would advance the cause of the peace farthest, which, as I am sure you realized, was also the reason behind the original donation.

In brief, I do not believe that the peace can be served any further by the pretense that there is in operation a world security organization.

Accordingly, I do not wish to be instrumental in fostering any false or dangerous popular reliance upon the ability of this body as presently constituted to create and maintain world law.

You were good enough in acknowledging the original grant to say that I had rendered humanity a great service; I am now unhappily convinced that the repudiation of my gift, ungracious and distasteful as it is, may actually render an even greater service.

What has happened in the last two months has strained the mind and conscience of mankind. Liberal discounts are of course to be made for the tensions thrown up by the backwash of war; those are the normal pains, the inevitable pressures and problems of adjustment and rebuilding. But the strains of which I speak are neither normal nor inevitable. These strains have become dynamic and incendiary.

There is no need to dramatize the implications of these strains.

Let me at this point discuss the purpose of my gift more fully than I saw reason to do last fall.

I believed at the time that the United Nations, weak as it was structurally and in the substance of authority, represented the only reasonable hope of avoiding war. Because I am an American, I looked to this country to take the leadership in giving the UN the actual and working machinery of world law.

In expecting this, I was not being merely idealistic. I saw no way of preventing war unless the United Nations were given the power to make decisions and to administer them—through preponderant force, if necessary. I saw no hope for individual nations either through disarmament or armament—unilateral or multilateral. Disarmament without the going concern of a world organization to guard against violations would actually be an incentive for secret rearmament by ambitious and unscrupulous powers, as in the case of Nazi Germany. But armaments led to armament races and armament races led to war. I could see no security for the American people in an atomic stockpile, especially in view of the surprise factor and the devastating nature of the new weapon—a weapon which other major nations are developing for themselves.

The only possible security I could envision, for ourselves or anyone else, was in the direction of a vastly strengthened world organization.

I did not see, nor do I now see, how it is possible for nations to remain free of war through the exercise of their individual and frequently competitive wills. I did not see, nor do I now see, how it is possible for Americans or any other people today to achieve security by developing security zones in the traditional manner of diplomacy and militarism. I did not see how unfettered nationalisms could rub up against each other in a suspicious and fear-ridden world without creating dynamic friction.

Not that I thought world law was without its difficulties or its risks. But I was deeply convinced that we had no other choice.

Not for a moment was I unaware of the problem of getting the Russian leaders to agree to become part of a world organization with superior authority in those specific matters related to the common security. Nor was I unaware of the basic problem presented by the difference between the communist and non-communist ideologies.

Yet here, too, I felt that there was still a field in which intelligence rather than force might operate. I agreed with General Eisenhower that if any clash between the two did come, it would be the result of sheer blundering and ineptitude, rather than of any underlying or basic differences in the opposing ways of life.

I am afraid that the public climate in America is rapidly working itself around to the point where it will be impossible to enlist reason and intelligence in dealing with Russia. I am afraid that we are rapidly destroying the basis for any constructive *modus vivendi* in getting Russia to come into a United Nations organization strengthened along the lines I spoke of a moment ago.

I am afraid we are talking ourselves into war. We have only to consult our newspapers for examples of combustible irresponsibility. An American Congressman, testifying the other day before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, declared that we should "take our spokesmen and tell them to stick their chins under those of Stalin, Molotov, and Vishinsky. We should tell them to shove their stomachs right up against these gentlemen, physically, and tell them either to disarm or we'll proceed."

And how would we proceed? By dropping the atomic bomb, of course, said this particular Congressman.

That statement by no means reflects an isolated point of view. I have found in many other high government and military quarters steadily mounting support for an atomic war against Russia before Russia gets her own A-bomb. The most complete case for such a "preventive war" is to be found in the new book by James Burnham, "The Struggle for the World." The argument is not complicated. Since a

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showdown is inevitable, sooner or later, it might be wise to have it sooner rather than later.

What we are witnessing in all this is the collapse of intelligence and conscience both — a collapse of such mountainous dimensions as to blot out the sight of reality. Does anyone think for a moment that moral values can be abruptly annihilated without injury to the annihilator? Does anyone dare dream that democracy as we have known it could survive the deliberate murder of millions of human beings — even though carried out under the pretext that we were certain we would be hit later if we did not act now?

But the grossest aberration of all is one which assumes the success of such a monstrous venture. After we atom-bomb Moscow and Leningrad and Stalingrad and the other principal industrial cities — what shall we do then? What shall we do about a Red Army that will almost automatically pour into Europe? Do we atom-bomb all Europe, killing perhaps hundreds of non-Russians for every Russian? And what do we do about those countries which have large internal communist problems? Do we atom-bomb them too? What about France? And China? And those countries of South America with strong communist parties?

Once we start acting under a case of atomic jitters, does anyone suppose that we can stop short of complete domination of the world — or whatever portion of the world that will not be reduced to radioactive rubble? And what will such domination mean if it will be operated under the type of insanity that achieved it?

No; I do not believe that a preventive war against Russia is the answer. It would inevitably mean the destruction of everything America was meant to stand for, perhaps the destruction of America itself.

Nor do I propose that America stand by idly while Russia and other nations perfect their own new mass-slaughter devices — atomic and otherwise. It would be foolish to suppose that the same pressures which exist here for a preventive war do not exist elsewhere, and for the same reason. Russia, too, has its own belligerent mental dwarfs who, like the Congressman I referred to a moment ago, believe in the stomach-to-stomach, chin-to-chin, toe-to-toe approach to its foreign policy. Russia, too, has its volatile blunderers who indiscriminately label any attempt to adjust differences as dangerous appeasement. Russia, too, is in the grip of the same incendiary jitters as we are.

I propose that we put the United Nations to work.

The disease from which Russia is suffering, the disease from which America is suffering, the disease from which the world is suffering, is the disease of unilateralism. Each nation is unwilling to create or maintain an authority with compulsory jurisdiction and adequate power. Each nation wants to be left to its own devices to assure or insure its security—the only trouble being that there is only so much land to go around and one nation's security may be another nation's poison. Security zones are common points of dynamic friction and contention. If, for our own security, we feel we must control Greece and Turkey, which are 5,000 miles away, it would be reasonable to suppose that the Russians, who live next door, feel it too.

I had supposed, in common with most people everywhere, that the purpose of establishing the United Nations was to make unilateralism unnecessary, impossible, and indefensible. Otherwise, why bother? Either we were building the machinery of peace, or we were building a fabulous and dangerous illusion.

Apparently, we have been building an illusion. Consider two facts, both of them closely related.

First, the world is still without control of atomic weapons. Indeed, the atomic armaments race has been officially launched. It is difficult to avoid any other conclusion after Russia's rejection of the Baruch Plan.

Second, the President of the United States openly and directly violated the letter and spirit of the United Nations Charter by calling for American intervention in Greece and Turkey, albeit at the invitation of those nations.

The relationship between these two events is strong and real. They are both specimens of unilateralism, both attempts to operate under the traditional policy of "me-first."

In Russia, comment in the press and by spokesmen held to the line that the real interests of world peace were being served by the rejection of the Baruch Plan, and by Russian emphasis on "unanimity."

In America, comment in the press and by Government officials has taken the line that the President's by-passing of the United Nations has actually strengthened the UN by doing a job for it that it was not equipped to do itself.

Thus in both nations, we witness identically the same dangerous double-talk, identically the same astigmatism so far as building a common peace is concerned. In both nations a climate of hysteria is being whipped up that complicates and hinders any sober attempt to deal with the problems between the two nations. Already in this country, sincere Americans who are bewildered and angry at the President's tactical blunder in ignoring the United Nations are being labeled as Communists for taking the United Nations point of view.

While there is still time, I intend to exercise my sovereign right of free thought and free speech, and condemn with all the emphasis at my command any act or deed which I believe to be inimical to the building of a common peace, whether the source is the head of the Communist Internationale or the President of the United States.

I believe that the President of the United States did the American people and the cause of world security grievous damage in using a unilateral approach to the crises of Greece and Turkey. What a magnificent opportunity he had to use that crisis as the specific need for proposing such strengthening amendments to UN as would have enabled it to deal with emergencies.

Let us stretch a point and say that the President felt his hand was forced in Greece, and that he had no choice but to act quickly to meet an immediate threat, since the UN as presently constituted provided no such mobility of action. But even if we grant this, how can we justify his failure to couple up his request of aid to Greece with specific proposals that would bolster the United Nations within the shortest possible time, so that the United States could be relieved of such frightful responsibility?

Only a volcanic eruption of American public opinion, I am convinced, can persuade the American government to take the leadership in pro-

(*Continued on page* 44)

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Reading for Exiles

SIR: Your readers are, in my mind, a unique group who, in this bewildered world, have maintained the tradition of *living* with reading. I would like to ask their help in answering a question. For many years I have had neither the leisure nor the energy for reading great books. I imagine there are many people in my position who must coast along through life using up eyes on superficial or imperative reading.

I plan to detach myself for four months from the over-intense and over-busy life. I shall be on a schooner, sailing to the Far North, where there are no telephones, no post offices, no roads, nor automobiles. How would *SRL* readers fill this golden opportunity, if they were in my place?

I need advice and help. I think we would all agree that long lists of suggested or required reading for exiles run pretty much according to established pattern. Hence my request to *SRL* readers good enough to respond: Please limit your "list" to the title of a single book—limit it to the one book in the world you feel has given you the most in terms of deep personal satisfaction, the one book that you reread regularly out of a sense of personal duty; indeed a book you couldn't live without.

By way of facilitating such nominations, let's eliminate the obvious selections of the Bible and the one-volume Shakespeare.

Suggestions, please.

RUTHERFORD PLATT.

New York, N. Y.

EDITOR'S NOTE: SRL's *editors would like to start the nominations rolling by entering William Macneile Dixon's "The Human Situation" published by Longmans, Green & Co. (March, 1938). It is a magnificent distillation and synthesis of a humanistic philosophy, suited to the needs of a world showing advanced symptoms of philosophical and political myopia.*

"Let the Eagle Scream"

SIR: My candidate for the best editorial of 1947—even at this early date—is "Let the Eagle Scream," by H. S., in *The Saturday Review of Literature* for March 15.

GERALD W. MOVIUS.
Motion Picture Assn. of America,
Washington, D. C.

SIR: The same mail that brought me your highly optimistic, God-is-in-His-Heaven-and-all-is-well "Let the Eagle Scream," brought one of the other kind—a deep, dark, dank, pessimistic wail from Vardis Fisher.

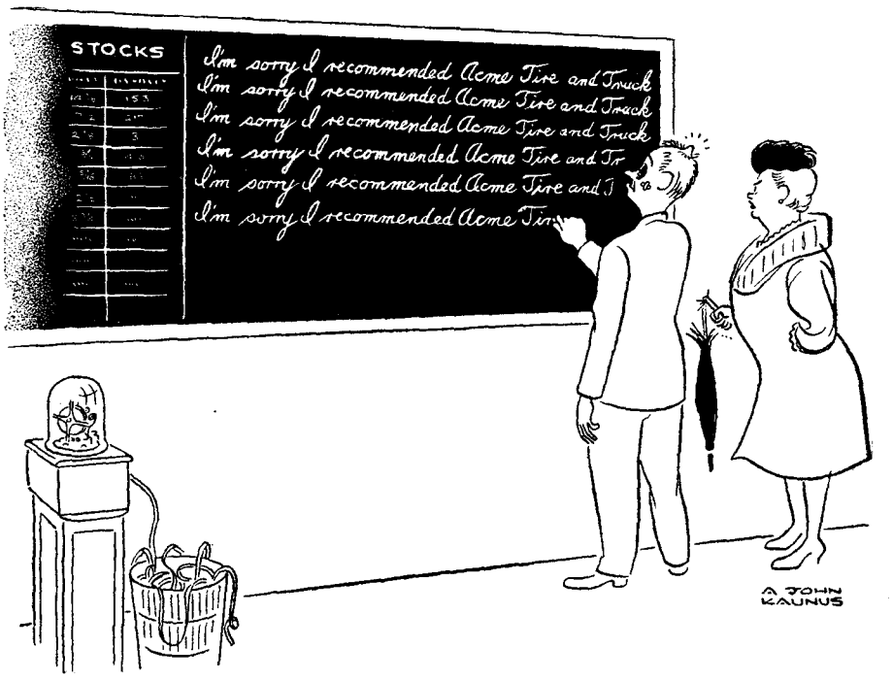
Where is the truth? Maybe, somewhere between the two, with heavy leanings toward Mr. Fisher's picture.

Yes, I was in Europe in 1910 and enjoyed those delights that your editorial pictured—and with the further rapture of the trip home on that Good Ship *Lusitania*. But Europe is not alone in its changes. You have enumerated some of our changes here at home and Mr. Fisher has told us a lot more. Frederick Lewis Allen has listed still others but this by no means exhausts the list. The pages of almost every issue of *SRL* enumerates and details some of the most critical. Something tremendously vital has gone out of us as a people, and we assuredly are not very happy about it all. You say that both our democratic institutions and our economic have emerged out of all of recent situations unimpaired. I doubt if this is true. And may be all the worse if it is true, for there were great changes and vital growths that we should have been making, but have not.

Maybe, it is well enough to pat ourselves on the back—as your words generously do—but my guess is that there are vast growths, changes, and improvements that we ought to be making and vast reaches of mind, heart, and soul that we ought to be striving for.

J. G. MASTERS.

Smethport, Pa.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A JOHN KAUNUS

SIR: The Screaming Eagle laid an egg. The paean of chest thumping Americanism which Harrison Smith resounded in his editorial of March 15, 1947, comes with poor grace, despite its disclaimer of provincialism, in a magazine which reflects a sensitive humanism and a cosmopolitan breadth of spirit.

America has a great deal to be thankful for in its earthly bounty, a great deal to be proud of in its democratic institutions. These are not strengthened or safeguarded by airing our virtues to ridicule all criticism, or proclaiming ourselves world savior. It is no tribute to the American heritage to gloat in our prowess, assume a rosy state of perfection, or regard our brethren on other continents with stepfatherly condescension. A little humility is in order to temper our legitimate sense of power, responsibility for sharing our blessings as a matter of justice along with our individual generosity, and continued vigilance to protect the liberties we have been fortunate to sustain. Let the eagle be proud silently. He has enough screaming to do to protect himself from those who wish to preen themselves in his feathers.

H. D. STEIN.

New York, N. Y.

Recent Trends vs. Mr. Wylie

SIR: Philip Wylie's review of "Modern Woman: the Lost Sex [*SRL* Feb. 1] is very rankling, not because it does or does not do justice to the book, but because Mr. Wylie devotes over one-and-a-half columns to a discussion of why psychology is a science and why it has come into its own later than other sciences.

Some day, perhaps, Mr. Wylie's rambling, superficial psychological views may be rudely shattered. He deals with a sure hand, discusses knowingly "Freud's 'death wish' . . . Jung's broad theory of instinct . . ." etc. But how shattered would be his delusions if he were to take the trouble to investigate recent trends in psychology . . . and when and if he does so, Mr. Wylie will find that many psychologists, especially younger ones, agree with the "physical scientists" that psychology—the science of the study of the behavior of organisms (not just humans—still has a long way to go before it can equal many of the physical sciences in their achievements.

Mr. Wylie will also find that many of these up-and-coming younger psychologists (myself included—I am at present studying for my Ph.D. and doing research work in behavioral psychology at Columbia University) will take him to task for his superficiality, his pseudo-scientific technique, and his insistence that he has practically the last word when it

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DONALD H. BULLOCK.

New York, N. Y.

Boiling American Blood

SIR: I am in the embarrassing position of having a gift subscription to *The Saturday Review;* otherwise I should certainly cancel my subscription after reading Mr. Weiskopf's shamefully unfair review of "Defeat in Victory" by Jan Ciechanowski [*SRL* Mar. 8].

I have not a drop of Polish blood, but I do have in my veins the blood of an old-fashioned American whose speech about choosing death rather than the surrender of liberty is still sometimes quoted. I remember that Pulaski and Kosciusko did not let him down. I feel enough shame over the betrayal that Mr. Ciechanowski recounts with such dignity, and now I have to bear the additional shame of Mr. Weiskopf's review.

MIRIAM CRENSHAW.

Los Angeles, Calif.

Bennett Cerf, Swedish Edition

SIR: When our Swedish edition of Bennet Cerf's "Try and Stop Me" was published recently, it occurred to me

that readers of *SRL* might be interested in seeing the jacket, a copy of which is enclosed.

SVEN-ERIK BERGH.

AB Ljus Förlag,
Stockholm, Sweden.

Sez Henry Miller!

SIR: I hasten to draw your attention to a serious error in the second paragraph of "The Problem of Patchen" [*SRL* Mar. 22]. Therein Jean Starr Untermeyer states: "Let us look first at Henry Miller's 'Patchen, Man of Anger & Light.' In a lively prose that leans toward the melodramatic and with a mixture of true insights and exaggerated distortions, Henry Miller gives us a portrait of a man who, in his own words, is both a 'sincere assassin' with 'no manners, no grace, no tact' and, at the same time, 'a gentle prince who suffers at the mention of the slightest cruelty'."

Under the photograph which accompanies the article, appears this caption: Kenneth Patchen, self-styled as an assassin without grace and as a gentle prince who suffers at the slightest cruelty.

Self-styled! *These descriptive words are by Henry Miller, not by me!*

Perhaps it is unwise for an "obscure" writer to urge anyone how to read, or how to write without leaving ambiguous pronouns floating around; but I do ask you to set the above matter straight in the pages of your magazine, if not in the minds of many of your readers who have already founded judgments on the misinformation given therein.

KENNETH PATCHEN.

Old Lyme, Conn.

Works in Progress

SIR: Since the appearance in 1932 of J.Y.T. Greig's edition of the letters of David Hume a considerable number of unpublished Hume letters have come to light. In collaboration with Professor W. G. Maclagan of Glasgow University and Dr. R. Klibansky of Oriel College, Oxford, the undersigned is preparing a supplementary volume for publication.

In recent years numerous Hume autographs have been sold and are now widely scattered about the country. I am, therefore, addressing this appeal to librarians, private collectors, and dealers to be so good as to inform me if they have any Hume letters (or other manuscript materials) not included in Greig's edition, or published by him only from printed sources. I shall be pleased to pay all expenses for the making of photostats or certified copies.

ERNEST C. MOSSNER.

Syracuse University
Syracuse, N. Y.

SIR: I am preparing a history of the former Boston publishing house of Roberts Brothers. If readers of *The Saturday Review of Literature* could furnish me with any information concerning Lewis A. Roberts, the founder of the firm, and his family, as well as Thomas Niles, his talented partner, I should be most grateful.

RAYMOND L. KILGOUR.

Ann Arbor, Mich.

Hymns of Hate

SIR: Listen, Critics.
Fed to the teeth with your smug groans
About clichés that chill your bones,
I long to drag you to your lairs
And leave you lay there. Hell, who cares?

ESCA G. RODGER.

Rock Island, Ill.

SIR: The careless hide I'd like to birch
Puts deacons in John Wesley's church,
And with slothful unconstraint
Makes deacons deak where deacons ain't.

DERMER S. STOUT.

Follansbee, W. Va.

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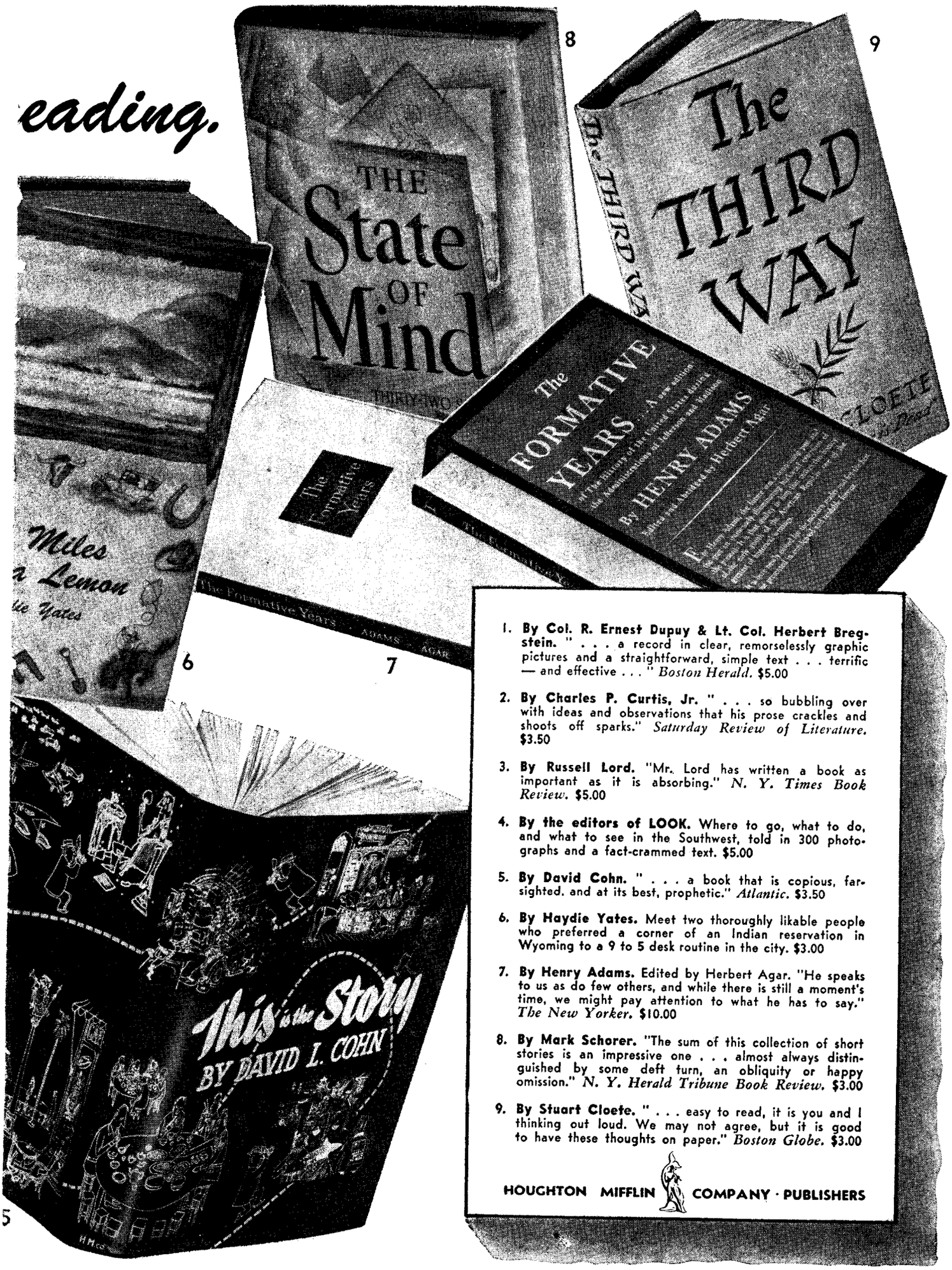

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Seeing Things

GROUNDED EAGLE

WE have all seen her. I mean the little girl Alexander Woollcott chose as a symbol for stagestruck females. She was strutting up and down the parlor with a chenille portiere trailing behind her to make her feel elegant. No doubt she still is. The wonder is she was not playing queen as well as lady. All that is missing from Mr. Woollcott's portrait of her is the circlet of crenellated cardboard (gilded, if possible) which she would have worn upon her head to indicate regality.

The appeal of ermine and trains, and what Daisy Ashford described as "a small but costly crown," does not end with childhood for the stagestruck. Even in these graying proletarian times, when thrones have tottered like card houses in a nursery, and Graustark has moved to another planet, grown-up actresses still have soft spots in their hearts and heads for queens. It would be inhuman to expect them not to. At least, if they are good actresses.

The advantages of palace architecture are self-evident to players no less than monarchs. Did Copernicus prove that the earth revolves around the sun? Well, palaces, as the Sun-King knew, can be built upon Copernican principles. Even when they are made of canvas rather than stone, and have become scenery instead of sights, palaces give the lie to Ptolemy. In royal residences on the stage a star may have replaced the sun. But have no fear, the stellar system is every bit as centralized as the solar.

Good actresses would be foolish if they objected to settings blessed with grandiose staircases. ("The better to make an entrance with, my dear.") Or bugles which herald their coming. Or balconies opening on courtyards from which they can, if asked to, acknowledge the plaudits of their unseen people. Or great canopied beds placed as scrupulously upstage as are their thrones.

Among the other blessings upon which Star-Queens can congratulate themselves is the fact that for two hours at a time they are the inheritors of royal prerogatives. Etiquette does not permit them to be interrupted. They must not only be curtsied to by other Equity members; they must be listened to so long as they want to talk.

Then, of course, if they happen to be impersonating the kinds of queens that are fun to play, they can clap their regal palms while issuing commands. They can sweep about with their chins pointed at the ceiling. They can employ their eyebrows as if they were ultimatums, and flash their eyes like beacons at an airport. They can bury their bosoms in decorations, and lounge in crowns which, though paste, sparkle like the marquees out front. Above all, they can—and usually must—indicate that, beneath the marble of their imperial demeanor, there lurks a passionate mortal well prepared to distinguish between state occasions and private opportunities.

Vandamm.

"Even Talullah Bankhead . . . cannot keep M. Cocteau's play from seeming more like a six-months' night in the Arctic Circle than a lively evening in the theatre."

THERE is, in other words, every understandable backstage reason why Tallulah Bankhead should have found the queen in "The Eagle Has Two Heads"* irresistible. This does not mean that for us out front Jean Cocteau's play is not easy to resist. It means only that Miss Bankhead would have to be even more extraordinary than she is not to have succumbed to the part.

From her point of view M. Cocteau's drama is not a vehicle but a royal coach, all gilt and plumes, glass doors, bouncy springs, and acclamations. The fault is not hers if it does not carry her to a coronation. Or ours if, from our standpoint, it proves as a conveyance to be on a par with Cinderella's long after midnight.

No one on our stage is quite like Miss Bankhead. To tell playgoers at this late date that she is an amazing performer is, as a piece of reporting, about as newsworthy as it would be to inform a group of geologists that Vesuvius is an active volcano. Miss Bankhead does not belong to the pale sisterhood of actresses whose only theatrical accomplishment is that they manage to look and act like the women facing them in their audiences.

There is nothing negative about her. She is of a species, if not a race, apart. An unapostolic succession extends from Clytemnestra and Jocasta, through Messalina and the Slavic Catherine, right down to her own incandescent self. Miss Bankhead's personality is all fire. She smoulders and erupts, where others smile and ogle. There is as much heat in her laughter as there is in her frowns. She is a furnace no less than a woman. As I once pointed out, in her presence we understand why theatres need asbestos curtains.

She is a patrician and a lion-tamer; a tragedian and a comedian; a Polly Peachum on speaking terms with fate and a Medusa who laughs. Her beauty, which is real, is scarcely of a Sunday school variety. It is disenchanted,

* *THE EAGLE HAS TWO HEADS, a play by Jean Cocteau, adapted by Ronald Duncan. Directed by John C. Wilson. Settings by Donald Oenslager. Costumes by Aline Bernstein. Presented by Mr. Wilson. With a cast including Tallulah Bankhead, Helmut Dantine, Clarence Derwent, Kendall Clark, and Eleanor Wilson. At the Plymouth Theatre.*

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yet enchanting; the prey and the immediate expression of a whole repertory of impulses, whims, and moods.

Her face can at one moment be almost Cordelia-soft; at the next, harder than Goneril's. Its volatility is endless. It can bubble with vivacity, and freeze with hate. But always it is a flower from Baudelaire's garden, night-blooming in its pallor, torrid only in its passion and intensity.

Miss Bankhead's voice is something that in its range outdistances the express elevators at the Empire State. She can make bassos look to their laurels, and sopranos mind their high C's. She can cajole or mock, entice or terrify, grind nails on her tonsils, or outroar Leo. Her laugh is so volcanic a force that, if she released it on the streets of Herculaneum, startled citizens would not unnaturally take to their heels. She can be an empress from boot to tiara, more royal than an imperial coat-of-arms. Then, just as suddenly, she can go slumming among the emotions in the brighter lighted districts of her capital.

The truth is Miss Bankhead is a show in herself—and something of a side-show, too. She has enough temperament to share with whole stagefuls of more tepid performers; enough energy also to permit Niagara to take a well-earned rest. She can at times be victimized by her blazing virtues. Although vastly exciting, the boldness of her ease upon the stage is on occasion as uncomfortable to watch as it is to see a guest making himself too much at home in another person's house.

BUT beyond any question she is one of the few genuine virtuosi our theatre boasts. Her endowments are almost outsized for the Junior Miss Department of the workaday stage. This does not explain the damage which occurred when she collided with Cleopatra. Or her only middling success as Sadie Thompson. But it may explain why, with the exception of her notable performance of Regina in "The Little Foxes," and perhaps of Sabina in "The Skin of Our Teeth," Miss Bankhead has had her troubles finding parts worthy of her gifts.

She has been more interesting by far than most of the plays in which she has chosen to appear since her return to this country. These have included such indifferent scripts as "Dark Victory," "Forsaking All Others," "Something Gay," "Reflected Glory," and "Foolish Notion." Even the least of these, however, was sensible and sprightly compared to "The Eagle Has Two Heads."

What Mr. Cocteau was up to when he committed this particular rive

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gaucherie, I cannot pretend to know. His deeper meaning, existent or non-existent, will, no doubt, be made clear to us in Eric Bentley's good time by Eric Bentley. Judging merely by what meets the ear and eye in the American production, M. Cocteau is writing as if he were a pathologist who has lost his way in Ruritania. He is telling the story of a widowed queen, a great lover of thunderstorms and violence in all things, who prowls—veiled—around the sumptuous palace Donald Oenslager has designed for her.

The queen falls in love with a young revolutionary poet, and he, not unexpectedly, falls in love with her. He has burst into the palace to assassinate her, which is precisely what she wants him to do because she is possessed with the idea of death. She finally has her way. She so infuriates the poet by beating him with her riding crop, when he is dying from some poison he has swallowed, that he reaches for an ever-handy revolver and shoots the queen in the back.

This final double death, though exciting when it does occur, does not take place until two unbelievably sleepy acts have run their filibustering course. In the first of these Miss Bankhead delivers to the poet (whose stamina as a listener is unrivaled) a speech which, even in its now abbreviated form, runs some seventeen minutes by the clock. In the second act the poet has his retaliatory moments as a monologist. But in the third act things suddenly grow livelier.

Having beaten the dying poet to a queen's taste, Miss Bankhead climbs up the long flight of palace stairs to be shot in the back in the very act of bowing to her cheering, if imaginary, subjects outside. She crumples over, totters, and supports herself for an instant by hanging onto a curtain. Thereafter, giving the curtain a yank which pulls it loose, she takes a tumble down the first few stairs which even the Walenda family would have to admire. Meanwhile the poet, whose poison has suddenly begun to work, dies happily at the bottom of the same staircase, reaching upward to touch his beloved.

As acrobatics, Sardoodledom, old-fashioned greasepaint monkeyshines, and downright ghoulishness, this last scene is beyond question stirring. And Miss Bankhead is wonderfully theatrical in it. Moreover, she is capably aided by Helmut Dantine, a handsome and effective young actor who, as the poet, snake-hips his way through a performance that makes much of little. But even Miss Bankhead, brilliant as she is, pro-

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found as is my admiration for her blazing gifts, and magnificent as she looks all dressed up as a queen in Aline Bernstein's costumes, cannot keep M. Cocteau's play from seeming more like a six-months' night in the Arctic Circle than a lively evening in the theatre.

Watching Miss Bankhead is always excellent fun. She can exert a cobra's spell. Listening to her quickens the senses much as in wartime they were quickened by the warning blasts of an air raid siren. But, Bankhead enthusiast that I am, I must admit I found myself napping during her interminable first act speech. Trained by the Navy to believe that chocolate is a provider of energy, included in K-rations and wise to use at H-hours, I purchased a Hershey bar during the intermission. Once again, though so fortified, I fought a losing battle against having my eyelids meet. It was only during the last act that I woke up entirely.

In fairness to M. Cocteau it seems right to assume that something is missing in the American translation or the New York production of his play which made that play a success in both Paris and London. The ever-ready Professor Bentley has offered an explanation which at least satisfies him. He says the script was meant to be acted as a fantasy and that Miss Bankhead has damaged it by turning it into a melodrama. What Mr. Bentley fails to say is what kind of fantasy it could ever have been or how the melodramatics of its last act could have been avoided.

SEEKING for illumination on this point, I turned to an article on Jean Cocteau by Velona Pilcher in the April *Theatre Arts*. Authors cannot be blamed for their admirers. But sometimes they can be judged by what they do to them. Miss Pilcher's piece deserves first prize for this year's critical balderdash. Her concluding paragraphs, which are masterpieces of nonsense, run as follows:

"The original use of myth, in Cocteau's plays and poems, is original only in the exact sense that he has experienced the origin of myth. He has gone down to the source. Crossing the bridge of Psyche, following dreams to the death, traveling along that narrow nerve of time between sleeping and walking—that slack-wire slung between two mysteries—he has found that true imagination is true. Theatre caught him. He trusted her. She taught him. Within the shadow of her wings he has learned professional secrets; and found that things do happen, to some people, at some times.

"Magic, black and white, does find its way into stage properties when

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played on with particular emotions. Plants do speak, doors open without touch and horses prophesy. Castles can be enchanted, mirrors catch or cast off images, limbs lead a life of their own. Some bodies do embody a law of metamorphosis, and a man—some man—can converse with gods, guard angels, exorcise devils, and drink from the Grail. Life is miraculous, and myths and fairy tales bear witness. Art is alchemical, and may be hazardous. Zarathustra also fell, and broke his brain. Theatre does come to life. Once the arrow is over, anything can happen. Plays have been known to take up their writers and walk and do things even more strange."

Perhaps that is the real trouble with "The Eagle Has Two Heads." It took up M. Cocteau and took him for a walk that leads precisely nowhere.

* * *

ADDENDUM: In the Book of Common Prayer sins of omission rank side by side with those of commission. Several properly bewildered readers (including Max Gordon, the producer of "Years Ago") have written in to find out why, when praising Ruth Gordon's autobiographical play and Fredric March's excellent performance in it, I made no mention of Florence Eldridge.

Of course I should have done so. What is more, I meant to do so. Certainly what must have seemed a slight was not intentional. I both admired and enjoyed Miss Eldridge's warm and skilful characterization of the mother. I also meant to mention Donald Oenslager's setting which was happily contributive in both its period and Wollaston details. My only excuse, and a poor one, is that my copy got out of hand. I was writing about the advantages of seeing a play late in the run rather than judging it on its first-night; about Mr. March's development as an actor; and about Miss Gordon's script. Try as I did, I found I just could not make adequate mention of Miss Eldridge and Mr. Oenslager. Perhaps I had better fall back on Miss Pilcher's explanation of Cocteau and, with appropriate apologies and blushes, point out that articles, too, have been known to take up their writers and walk and do things even more strange.

JOHN MASON BROWN.

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I DREAMT I WAS MR. ROCKEFELLER

(*Continued from page* 33)

posing and supporting specific amendments to the United Nations which would—

1. Strengthen the central body so that no state would have the right or the power to withdraw or secede;
2. Give the United Nations the machinery to make and enforce decisions in the area of common security;
3. Give the United Nations access to and control over the individual in these well-defined and limited areas related to world security, such as in the control of atomic weapons and all other weapons adapted to mass destruction.

* * *

What is necessary, of course, is full and complete realization that only through such a strengthened United Nations do we have any reasonable chance of living in peace under a free government.

As a sort of ground-clearing operation for that realization, I am withdrawing my land grant — with the hope, of course, that such a withdrawal may only be temporary. I could not answer to my conscience if I felt I was instrumental in the erection of empty edifices — false and misleading symbols of security.

Skyscrapers are impressive. They combine majesty with strength, grandeur with permanence. It would be tragic if people would turn to rising steel and concrete as proof that a real organization was in existence when in reality we have none.

The first place to build towers is in the mind. Let us first have a towering idea and then translate it into actuality. Let us do real honor to our hopes at San Francisco by deciding that the United Nations is to be more than a side-show and forum for debate. Let this country finally do honor to its history and ideals by being the first to make the strengthening proposals.

When that is done, we should build, but not before. When that is done, the land will be ready.

In advancing the bolstering amendments to UN, let us make clear with the utmost sincerity, emphasis, and good will, that they are not directed in any way against any nation. Let us make clear that our job is the common one: to devise the means of a common security. Let us hold out our hand to the rest of the world. Let us hope that all nations will accept it.

But if this should not happen; if a nation or nations decide to stay out, then let the rest of us proceed. Let us, in the way we operate the strengthened United Nations, prove that such preponderance as we may enjoy is no threat to the others. Let us be hopeful that in time we may yet persuade the others to come in.

What we must do we should have done long ago. It is late but not too late. It is never too late for survival.

Sincerely yours,

JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER.

* * *

And that is what I did when I dreamt I was Mr. Rockefeller.

N.C.

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ALMANAC FOR SPRING READING

(*Continued from page 18*)

logical thriller woven about the murder of his stepbrother by a supersensitive young man.

★ ★

Lovers of "My Friend Flicka" and "Thunderhead" will be sure to welcome Dana Faralla's "The Magnificent Barb" (Messner), a touching, unsentimental, and engrossing tale of a boy's infatuation with a horse.

★ ★

The indefatigable Taylor Caldwell has produced another novel "There Was a Time" (Scribners).

★ ★

Truth with its hopes and fears, its ideals and disillusionments, has its day in A. W. Grafton's "My Name Is Christopher Nagel" (Rinehart).

★ ★

A peasant tale, at once simple and gripping, Ernst Wiechert's "The Girl and the Ferryman" (Pilot Press) is profoundly moving in its portrayal of humble and unsophisticated persons in the grip of love.

★ ★

Charles Angoff reviews the days of not so long ago in his "When I Was a Boy in Boston" (Beechhurst), a series of sketches which reflect the pursuits and personalities which colored a young boy's life.

★ ★

That not all of Germany was quiescent under Nazi control is made evident in Ruth Andreas-Friedrich's "Berlin Underground" (Holt).

★ ★

Denis de Rougemont discusses world conditions and problems and what they imply for the civilization we know in "The Last Trump" (Doubleday).

★ ★

Elsie Singmaster presents a more favorable picture than historians have always given of the fiery opponent of the Fugitive Slave Law and all concession to the South in "I Speak For Thaddeus Stevens" (Houghton Mifflin).

★ ★

In "March of Freedom" (Harpers) William Harlan Hale throws into high relief certain episodes and personalities in America's journey through history. A book which communicates its gusto to the readers.

★ ★

Hermane Tavares de Sa, himself widely informed and traveled, writes with knowledge and discrimination of his countrymen in "The Brazilians: People of Tomorrow" (Day), a book less history than description and analysis.

★ ★

Baseball fans, rejoice! J. A. Taylor Spink reviews annals of the sport in "Judge Landis and Twenty-five Years of Baseball" (Crowell).

★ ★

Another in the Rivers of America Series is to appear in Walter Hard's "The Connecticut" (Rinehart).

★ ★

One need not be a mountaineer to feel the fascination of man's struggle to reach the hitherto unattainable in James Ramsay Ullman's "Kingdom of Adventure: Everest" (Sloane).

★ ★

Red Letter Day — Publication of John Gunther's "Inside U. S. A." (Harpers), a brilliant journalist's findings on the states of the Union.

Date Indefinite

"The Story of Mrs. Murphy" (Dutton), by Natalie Anderson Scott, a powerful, tough, and unforgettable picture of a lower middle-class youth whose weakness led to his ruin. One of the latest and most effective of the alcoholic stories.

★ ★

"The Red Danube" (Houghton Mifflin), by Bruce Marshall, a witty and delightful story built about British occupation officers quartered in a convent in Vienna.

★ ★

"The Lonely Carrot" (Dodd, Mead), by Mannix Walker, a highly diverting extravaganza.

★ ★

"The Rich Woman" (Random House), by Anne Meredith, the first part of which in its portrayal of unhappy childhood and the horror it knows has a Brontësque quality.

★ ★

"Knock on Any Door" (Appleton-Century), by Willard Motley, an appalling picture of delinquency and the deterioration of a young boy's character under reformative and prison experience.

★ ★

"American Envoy" (Viking), by Lion Feuchtwanger, an historical novel in which Franklin and Beaumarchais hold the center of the stage.

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Gifts from Gaels and Anglo-Irish

1,000 YEARS OF IRISH POETRY. Edited by Kathleen Hoagland. New York: Devin-Adair. 1947. 830 *pp.* $5.

Reviewed by ANN F. WOLFE

IRELAND'S poetry is far older than Beowulf. The opening poems of Miss Hoagland's anthology are ascribed to Amergin, who lived centuries before Christ. In early Ireland only the king was more powerful than the official poet. When, in the period of Ireland's cultural ascendancy, King Alfred left his native England to sit at the feet of Irish teachers, he was moved to take a Gaelic pseudonym and write verse. In Gaelic quatrains he acclaimed the civilization, the learning, and the hospitality of the five provinces. He found

. . . . . poets a many,
Poets well skilled in music and measure,
Prosperous doings, mirth and pleasure.

"1,000 Years of Irish Poetry" is the first comprehensive collection of Gaelic and Anglo-Irish poets—a major contribution to world literature. Except for Greece, Ireland has the oldest and purest vernacular literature in Europe. Its culture influenced the Icelandic sagas, the "Nibelungenlied" and the "Gudrunlied," the Arthurian romances. Queen Mab traces her lineage to Gaelic Maeve; Shakespeare's Puck is Ireland's ancient Puca.

The editor introduces to America two important poetic satires, the fourteenth-century "Land of Cockaigne" and the eighteenth-century "Midnight Court." She has repatriated Swift, Goldsmith, Wilde, MacNeice, and other Irish poets popularly thought of as English. She presents a notable company of contemporaries that includes not only famous Irishmen like Gogarty, Campbell, Colum, and Dunsany, but thirty-five lesser known poets whose work is new to this country.

Glocca Morra whimsy and mavourneen sentimentality have no place in this book. There is nothing synthetic about its Irishry. The poems have the unity of racial tradition, nostalgic with the glory that was Cashel and the grandeur that was Tara, the Homeric feasting and the high chivalry of Kincora, the scholarly dedication of monastic scribe and seafaring missionary. The tragic theme of "lofty Ireland, darkly sung" runs unbroken all the way from Cuchulain to Kevin Barry.

But it is not all "the fierce old Irish dead." Native wit and gaiety triumphed over invasion, penal laws, famine, and eviction. The ballad, immemorial weapon of Ireland's underground resistance against English tyranny, was not always a solemn thing. The humor of "Johnny, I Hardly Knew You" and "The Night Before Larry Was Stretched" is hardly innocent. There is gentle laughter in "Cockles and Mussels," "Kitty of Coleraine," and the verse of Mangan, Lever, and Father Prout. There are drinking songs galore, and saintly Bridget's prayer that God and the people of Heaven be guests in her house with plenty of ale to drink.

From misty antiquity Irish life has been conditioned by "the froth and spume of the maddened sea." There is sea poetry of all eras in this volume; it opens with Druidic reference to the ocean and closes with a poem of our day that brings the feathers of dead Icarus—an anachronistic "Paddy Finucane"—drifting in on the tides. Romantic love, patrician hospitality, passion for the land, unquenchable thirst for freedom, mystical community with nature—all aspects of the Irish character find voice in the unique and intricate native metrics and in conventional verse patterns.

Make the test of comparison. Set the tenth-century "Summer Has Come" or the ninth-century "Summer Is Gone" against "Summer Is I-Comen In." Even in translation the Irish poems glisten with primal freshness. Put "The Old Woman of Beare" alongside Villon's "Regrets de la Belle Heaulmiere," Davis's "Fate of King Dathi" beside the later "Charge of the Light Brigade." In imagery, color, and strength the Irish poets hold their own.

Miss Hoagland has provided a historical introduction and a remarkable compilation of biographical data. If the reviewer would take issue with her on a minor addition or subtraction, put it down to the fighting blood of Tyrone, its "spearmen and plunder, bards and wine, and holy abbot's prayers."

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 680)

ROBERT BROWNING: *EASTER-DAY*

And so I live, you see,
. . . . . .
happy that I can
Be crossed and thwarted as a man.
. . . . . .
Thank God, no paradise stands barred
To entry, and I find it hard
To be a Christian, as I said!
. . . . . .
. . . . . .But Easter-Day breaks!
. . . . . .Mercy every way
Is infinite,—and who can say?

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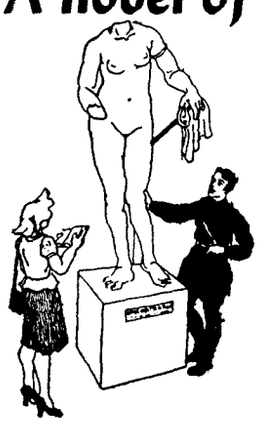

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"Man's Mind Grown Venerable"

TRANSPORT TO SUMMER. By Wallace Stevens. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. 1947. 147 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by JEREMY INGALLS

TRANSPORT to Summer" reinforces the accuracy of the appraisal—which is now, at last, current—that Stevens is a most deservedly respected poet. This volume, which includes fifty-five newly-published poems, provides further variations on his established major themes. His assured audience will add to their memory of "The major abstraction is the idea of man," new, indelibly Stevens phrases such as:

> uncertain particles
> Of the certain solid

and the epigram:

> The romance of the precise is not the elision
> Of the tired romance of imprecision.

They will recognize added ranges in his familiar figures, the soldier, the scholar, the poet, the citizen. Along with his inexhaustible invention on the theme of, "Let's see the very thing and nothing else," they will enjoy his continuing humor of word-play, and his characteristic speech, the long-suspended oblique rhyme, unobtrusive alliteration, subtleties of rhythm.

The import of the book's title lies in the sequence "Credences of Summer." "Summer," a term recurrent since Stevens's earliest poems, equates with the term "pleasure," as it rounds out the argument in "Notes Toward a Supreme Fiction." It extends the reference of "green corn gleaming" in the last section of "Esthétique du Mal." It connotes the fruition of the "so *many selves*" which, both in physics and metaphysics, are at once determinate and undetermined.

Stevens is now sixty-eight and has been publishing since 1914. For those who, despite his half dozen volumes and the number of critical articles on his work now available, have not yet discovered him, this collection is a favorable introduction. It includes with the new poems two previously published sequences, "Esthétique du Mal," his meditation on the fact of humanity without which evil has no categories, and his "Notes Toward a Supreme Fiction." Though in date of first publication, the "Notes" preceded the "Esthétique" by three years, it is especially appropriate that, in this just published collection, the "Notes" occupy the last, the culminating section. In lyric range and philosophic statement the "Notes" are the epitome of his craftsmanship and perception. Here, along with:

> the sounds that stick
> Inevitably modulating in the blood

lives most explicitly his patient affection for the human being:

> It is he, the man
> In that old coat, those sagging pantaloons,
> It is of him, ephebe, to make, to confect
> The final elegance, not to console
> Nor sanctify, but plainly to propound.

Stevens is sometimes chided for lack of violent indignation, for his elegance, for his record of "the half colors of quarter-things." There are two kinds of quietness, placidity of those who, encountering no indignities have no indignations, and the quietness of those who, like the old poet Tu Fu, having much occasion for indignation, have also the civilized strength to contemplate a rare and pleasant evening. Those who attend the whole import of Stevens's poems have discovered or will discover a record of the ancient indignities and indignations, but transmuted—"man's mind grown venerable" as in "Credences of Summer"—transmuted by a venerable serenity.

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT: No. 199

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 202 will be found in the next issue.

ABCDEFGHI GA J KBFLGHGBF

MNDKDLDFH HB ODCGDPGFQ

JFIHRGFQ SGHRBTH

DPGLDFKD.

N. Q. GFQDNABCC

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 198

Mischief comes by the pound, and goes away by the ounce.

THOMAS FULLER
Gnomologia.

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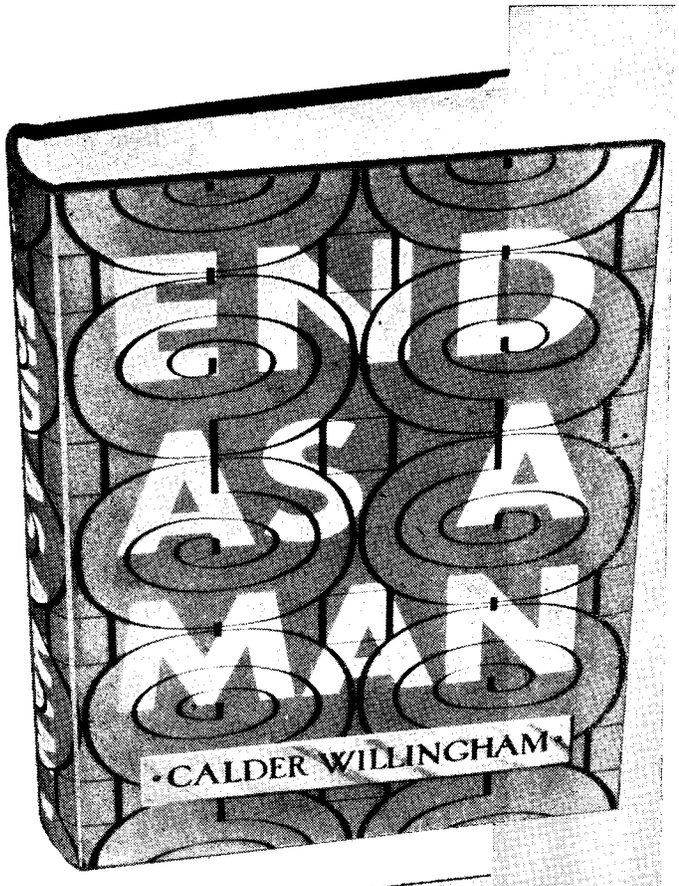

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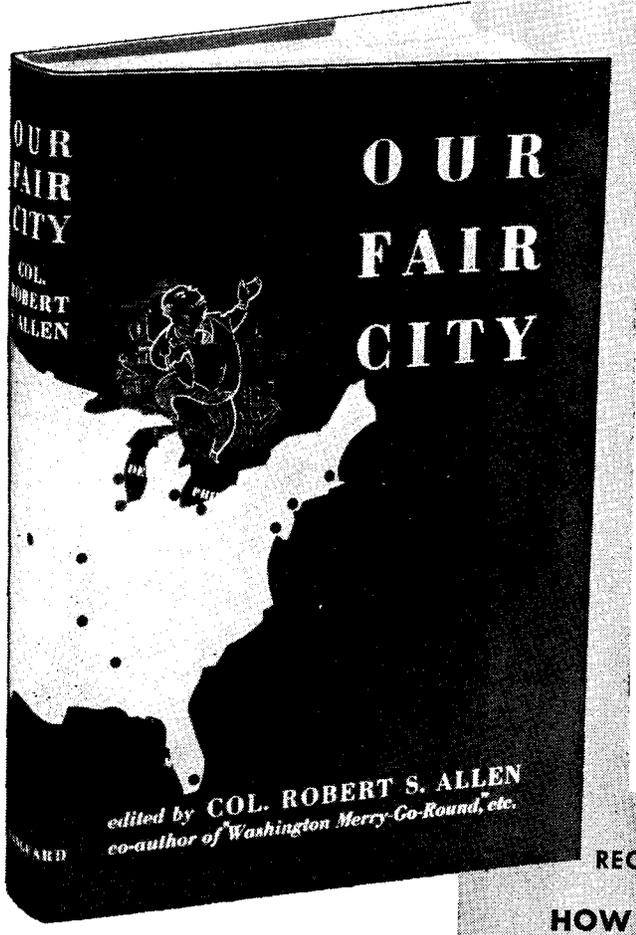

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Michigan Poetry Course

THE WELL WROUGHT URN. By Cleanth Brooks. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock. 1947. 270 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by HENRY W. WELLS

THE latest critical volume by Cleanth Brooks is at once solidly satisfying and unhappily provoking, since it has considerable penetrating commentary within an unhappily doctrinaire and rigid framework itself a fence excluding the larger world. The book is by no means all written on one level. Most of it remains perspicuous enough and, apparently, is little altered from what must have been an excellent and by no means usual course in English poetry given five years ago at the summer session of the University of Michigan. Some of it, as the "second appendix" on "poetry and belief," stalks metaphysical mysteries through the dark wood. Its best things are neither the simplest nor the most involved, for its author stands at times on too familiar ground and at times on ground too exotic for him to cultivate successfully. Poetry is assumed to rest within a sacred circle, from which historical and psychological considerations on the critic's part are exorcised as profane. To this illiberal outlook Brooks gives the name "humanism." A core of vigorous understanding is thus surrounded with inhibitions by no means always free from intellectual morbidity. Order becomes for Brooks almost an obsession.

The larger part of the book consists of ten essays on as many English poems. That on the imagery of "Macbeth" is moving and powerful. Exceptionally smooth and discerning critiques are given of Keats's "Ode on a Grecian Urn" and Tennyson's, "Tears, Idle Tears." There is a competent essay on Wordsworth's most famous ode. Finally, the analysis of "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso" is undoubtedly sound though hardly distinguished.

Brooks's concluding essay on the critical method followed throughout presents an ironic problem: one hardly sees why the author should be so stridently dogmatic in support of such innocent truisms. A mere strategy he presents as a theory. He concludes that poetry is inveterately paradoxical and ironic, wrought of many subtle tensions and contradictions. This, one supposes, has been generally acknowledged by all who have at any time supposed poetry to be a mirror of life or even a representative part of it. Proceeding from these modest premises, the weakness of the study arises chiefly from two causes. The author monotonously applies his formula to each poem and, while he repeatedly declares that no true poem, can be paraphrased, he as commonly assumes that his method is the sole and sufficient approach for the true critic. Thus at the beginning of his commentary on Wordsworth's "Ode," he writes: "It may actually surprise readers to see how much the poem, strictly considered in its own right, manages to say, as well as precisely what it says." It is a pity that a critic of such warm sympathies and lively imagination should so rigorously follow school formulae not of his own making and by servitude to a pedantic method inhibit the more versatile and human approach of which he is certainly capable. Brooks is imprisoned in a cage. He suffers from the familiar limitations of narrow and dogmatic doctrines; yet within these limits he frequently writes with admirable discernment.

World More Real

By Mae Winkler Goodman

IT WAS not dark itself she feared; she knew
That night was velvet-fingered, warm, and kind,
And fell across her eyes like living dew . . .
And yet the night could make her eyes feel blind.
Silence she loved, and yet would grow afraid
When sound had vanished, fearing she could not hear,
Until she heard the music a river made,
Or the soft rustle of the wind-shod deer.

Her senses have grown keyed to solid things
That she can clench within her mind's tight fist:
Taste is the honey, touch the feathered wings—
Yet always deep within her will exist
A world more real than sense, where she can go
Past light, past sound, past touch . . . and be . . . and know!

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Silver Cord, Slightly Tarnished

THE WISE IN HEART. By Nancy Kendall. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co. 1947. 282 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by NANCY GROBERG CHAIKIN

AND here we have unraveling before us—looking a little tired and a little tarnished—the silver cord, accompanied by that most terrifying of Freudian monsters, the dominating Mamma. In this case it is Mamma Dean, creature of the late nineteenth century, whose hypocritical morality and neurotic possessiveness infect the lives not only of her own children—Tony and Laura—but of their small circle of friends and their parents.

The managerial Mamma lays careful plans for the Dean children, for the Carmody, Fanshaw, and Collins families—plans which do not include the wholesome Monie O'Neill, who lives at the other end of the park with her wise and sensible parents. Mamma's plans, after the frequent fashion of plans of mice and men, gang a-gley in the most excruciating fashion. It is not until she has wrecked several lives, and Tony (after a divorce from the unsatisfactory mate Mamma has chosen for him) has been reunited with Monie, that Mamma, still struggling against the inevitable, is defeated.

Just as Mamma, with her distorted notions of sex and marriage, her infectious hypocrisy and neurosis, has wrought rather a harrowing state of affairs, so Miss Kendall, in her study of unwholesome, unhappy mothers, has turned out rather a harrowing book. Calamity is everywhere; there is no more escape for the reader from the swift destructive results of Mamma's disease, than there is for the characters. I could not help feeling that Miss Kendall's portrait of Mamma, sinister and real a social problem as she is, is weakened in this story by all sorts of hackneyed statements and overworked ideas. Mamma is melodramatically and unoriginally treated; a little subtlety and restraint would have made her, rather than ridiculous, as formidable as she really is.

We cannot, of course, underestimate the importance of Miss Kendall's thesis and what it means to say about the effect of neurotic maternal domination. But we can expect, in a case which has been treated so many times before, more sharp and original treatment than we get in this fairly absorbing novel.

Your Literary I.Q.

By Howard Collins

PROPHECIES AND PREDICTIONS

This week's quiz is concerned with characters who were the subjects of prophecies and predictions. How many of them do you remember? Allowing five points for each one you can name and another five for either the story or the author, a score of sixty is par, seventy is very good, and eighty or better is excellent. Answers are on page 67.

1. "Beware of cold steel," a gypsy told him when he was young, and he died eventually from the blow of an axe.
2. A huffy fairy, on this child's birthday feast, declared: "The Princess shall prick herself with a distaff in her fifteenth year and shall fall down dead."
3. Condemned for witchcraft, this man stood on the scaffold, pointed a finger at his accuser, and said: "God will give him blood to drink!"
4. A palm reader told this man: "Look out for a dark man and a light woman, for they'll both bring ye trouble. Ye'll make a voyage upon the water very soon, and have a financial loss. There's a man coming into your life who will fetch ye good fortune. Ye'll know him when ye see him by his crooked nose. Good evening. Don't block the door."
5. An old sailor told this man: "I fear a hurricane; last night the moon had a golden ring, and tonight no moon we see!"
6. It was prophesied that before this man would die he would see two hearses on the sea, one not made by mortal hands, the other made of wood grown in America, and that only hemp could kill him.
7. A soothsayer told this conquering hero to "beware the Ides of March."
8. An apparition told this king that he should "never vanquished be until Great Birnam wood to high Dunsinane hill shall come against him."
9. An oracle predicted that this youth would slay his father and marry his mother.
10. A little bird told this hero: "A glorious bride awaits you, sleeping on a mountain surrounded by fire. If you break through the flames and awaken the maiden, she shall be yours."

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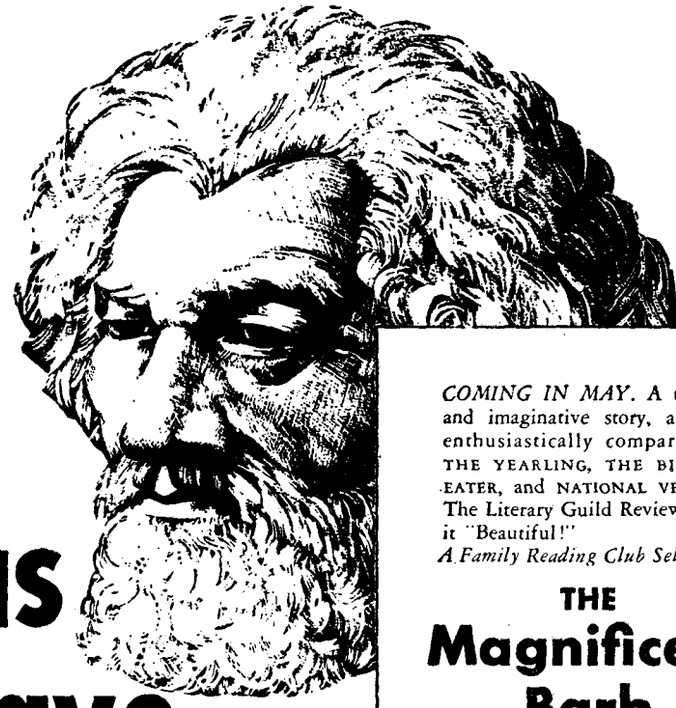

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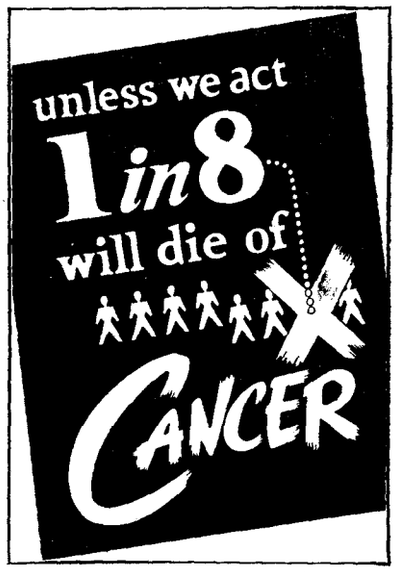

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Heroism Without Heroics

THE CRUISE OF THE BREADWINNER. By H. E. Bates. Boston: Little, Brown & Company. 1947. 112 *pp.* $1.50.

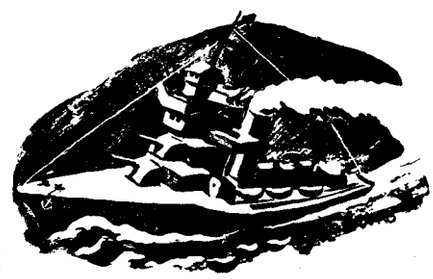
Reviewed by ROBERT A. ALLEN

IF you're looking for a short, delightfully written novel that will give you an hour or more of real pleasure, read this yarn of a day's cruise aboard a patrol boat off the English Coast. While "The Cruise of the Breadwinner" must be identified with the war books, it is this reviewer's hope that such labeling will not deter anyone from reading it. War or no war, Mr. Bates knows how to tell a story.

The reader expecting the usual war novel reflecting the disillusionment of its author will be disappointed. There are no passages on the plight of mankind, the futility of war, or the author's own philosophical dissertations on this unhappy age. Mr. Bates has told his story only in the simple words and courageous actions of his handful of characters caught in the holocaust of war. These men speak and act as men did when death and despair struck in combat. Here there is no room for eloquent discourse or profound reflection, and aboard the *Breadwinner* there is none.

The *Breadwinner*, a converted coastal fishing boat giving the appearance of a "discarded and battered toy," was the charge of Captain Gregson, a seafaring man of enormous physical proportions with an almost insatiable thirst for a cup of hot tea. The craft's sole armament was a Lewis gun, unused since World War I, mounted aft of the wheel house, itself little larger than a dog-kennel.

Skipper Gregson's crew of two consisted of Snowy, a sixteen-year-old lad eager for his first action, and Jimmy, engineer-gunner, with a wife and three children to think about and, more important for the *Breadwinner*, an habitual dislike for everything aboard and special contempt for the eighteen-horse engine which was forever breaking down. Snowy's main job was to prepare his master's hot tea, but the skipper's respect for the boy was based more on his uncanny aircraft recognition—by sound alone—than by the concoction he made up in the galley.



Within a few hours this strange team of warriors found excitement and tragedy and the youthful cabin boy saw a British pilot, wounded on deck after rescue by the *Breadwinner*, face death with compassion for the enemy. Snowy learned, too, that this same pilot, down at sea for the third time, looked on combat flying as he might look on Saturday's cricket match.

Mr. Bates has fashioned his story with great care to avoid over-sentimentality. At the same time he has described his characters with deep feeling and understanding for the emotions of men under severe strain. One will not easily forget the men of the *Breadwinner*—these are the little men who fought the war for freedom all over the world.

Amnesiac's Tale

THIS WORLD IS MINE. By Luigi Creatore. New York: Rinehart & Co. 1947. 245 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by BERTRAM D. LEWIN

THE author of this first novel, according to the publisher's statement, while serving in the Navy suddenly found himself in San Francisco without any memory for who he was or how he got there. The novel is said basically to be derived from this experience: the protagonist finds himself lost on a San Francisco street in the uniform of a pharmacist's mate and with a letter addressed to him by someone whom he cannot recall. He goes to the Navy hospital, and is placed in the psychiatric ward.

From here on, presumably, fiction enters. The novel becomes a series of good stories. There are mysterious dealings with doctors and their efforts to hypnotize him, to use drug psychotherapies, and to just plain bully him out of his amnesia; there are stories of what went on in the ward, told in an entertaining and skilful manner; his attempt to remember the past brings up the gripping tale of a pharmacist mate on duty during the attack on Pearl Harbor. All the stories are good, and the publishers are quite correct when they praise the author's "grace," "brilliance of style and method," and express their surprise that so skilful a book should be a first novel. The case history value of the book, however, is minimal; fiction completely obscures whatever clinical interest the true story might have had.

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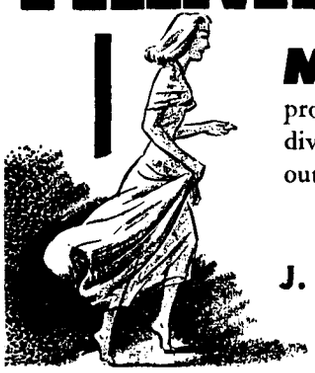

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Tragic Loves

THE BODY IS FAITHFUL. By Alis de Sola. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1947. 209 pp. $2.75.

Reviewed by SARA HENDERSON HAY

THIS is a collection of short stories, highly charged, dramatic, largely concerned with the frustrations, bitterness, and tragedy of love, and preoccupied with Freudian complexities. "The Subtle Bitch" is a morbid and unpleasant sketch of two people trapped by their physical desire, hating each other but unable to escape the compulsion which draws them together in shame and agony of spirit. "Whan That Aprille" is a glimpse of an aging satyr, reluctant to seduce an innocent girl but going about it, nevertheless, with self-loathing and despair. "He saw himself with horror, the old bull brooding in a corner of the pasture, brooding over the unguarded heifer, making her his own . . . Beware, little creature, he is coming out of his corner, the blood is thick and red in his eyes, he is powerful, powerful, there is no pity in his heart . . ."

There is the story from which the book takes its name, about a cowed and frustrated little cockney waif who finds consolation in a mysterious lover whom she meets in midnight trysts on a lonely beach, a man who can only declare his love under cover of darkness, and whose pitiful secret, once revealed, holds less terror and revulsion for her than the loneliness of her wretched life. "She Died Young" is a dramatic monologue in the manner of Dorothy Parker, an exposition of what goes on in the private mind of Miss Isabel Greentree, of the Alabama Greentrees, suh, while she confronts with outward decorum across a restaurant table the lover who has jilted her. This piece approaches dangerously close to burlesque, the melodrama is so extreme, the stock properties of the situation so familiar and well worn.

Miss de Sola's genuine talent is greatly handicapped by a devotion to what has become a formula in modern "slick" writing of the more pretentiously artistic type. The pseudo-poetic emotional lushness infuses much of her work and is instantly recognizable as a deliberately fostered idiom. There are, however, several stories in the collection which achieve a simplicity and directness worthy of Miss de Sola's talent, a talent whose own worst enemy she is. "The Comet" shows tender and perceptive insight into a child's fears and emotions; "Sweet Land" is a moving glimpse of

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a refugee's sudden overwhelming realization that he need no longer choke with terror at the sight of a uniform. But there are unfortunately too few of these genuine and delicately done pieces to keep the whole from having too much of a flavor of self-conscious sensationalism and artifice.

Old New York

BANNER BY THE WAYSIDE. By Samuel Hopkins Adams. New York: Random House. 1947. 442 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by NATHAN L. ROTHMAN

IF you can dote on background and color and the Americana of a century ago—and forget the plot—then this is your meat. Mr. Adams has dipped into a store of family reminiscences, supplemented them with loving research, and has come forth with a rollicking tale of old New York State in the 1830's. He tells of the traveling players, specifically the Thalia Dramatic Company, who ranged up and down the countryside dispensing sound, old melodrama, ballads, and recitations; of the book boats that plied along the Erie Canal and brought libraries to the townsfolk; of such vanished mores (at least I think they are vanished) as the dagger hidden in a maiden's sash at courting time and the Minister's Oath: a pledge to get drunk only at four given times of the year—Christmas, Muster Day, Independence Day, and Sheep Shearing. A vast, apparently endless scene unrolls upon the stage before us; it stirs with movement and color, with capering figures out of a more primitive, happier day.

Against this scene our two lovers enact—we must come to it at last—the plot. They are Endurance Adams and Jans Quintard, strolling players, who meet, love, separate, meet, agonize, part, and meet again, in the time-honored sequence that has certainly not vanished. The routine is not any more tiresome than usual, but it does dull somewhat the freshness of the panorama against which they posture, like stars in an operetta, duets and all. But overlook them if you like, or can, and revel with these other figures in the scene, who have no dramatic burden to carry save their own reality—the raffish players, the tavern girls, the river rats, the occasional stylish folk who tread warily here. Mr. Adams is one who can take the dust off an old scene and whip it with animate vigor before our eyes, complete with off-stage sounds, voices, music. That is the measure of the book's charm.

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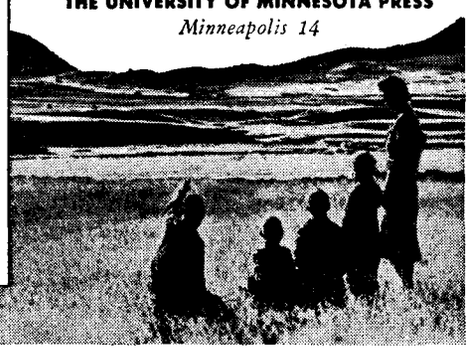

Symbolic Seven

DIVIDE THE HEART. By R. E. Dane. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, Inc. 1947. 183 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by JACK IAMS

SIX of the seven "Stories of Americans in France," as the slim volume is subtitled, are laid in the days that followed Germany's surrender, a period that started out deliriously happy and then, somehow, became unhappy and confused. The seventh, which incidentally isn't about Americans, takes place on the preceding Easter. It was a period that to a great many Americans in Europe (I was in Belgium then) acquired a dreamy, frustrating unreality, and this is the mood which permeates the book. Mr. Dane's style, which can be delicate and hard and sometimes luminous, is just right for it. The mood is enhanced, too, by the fact that four of his stories are laid in the French Basque country, from which he extracts a rich blend of the picturesque and the religious.

And yet—let's get this over with because it's a pity—none of the stories quite comes off. Something goes wrong; either it's laid on too thick or it's stretched too thin, always something. At best, one is left with a feeling of having read some very good writing but never with having read a very good story.

The one which comes closest to achievement within its limits is "When That Bell Rings Everybody Runs," and, coincidentally, it is the only one credited with magazine publication (in *Harper's Bazaar*). It's a description of a mental ward in an Army hospital near Paris and it catches the grimly quiet atmosphere with precision and intensity. But it is only a setting for a story, not a story.

"The Blind Man of Ascain," on the other hand, is a story and a half. It starts splendidly with a vivid Basque fete and a lecherous American soldier making a fool of himself. It's painful but good for you. And then the whole thing gets mixed up with some irritating symbolism involving the pipes of Pan and the story goes to pieces. It isn't saved, or even improved, by the twisteroo at the end—a slick-paper contrivance which doesn't even play fair with the reader.

Seven times over the same things are true. For instance "The Ghosts of Soccori" comes tantalizingly close to being a beautiful and passionate love story. Again there is the detailed picture of the Pays Basque, bright and sensitive, against which the frustrated love affair unfolds with power and

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restraint. Then out comes Mr. Dane's bag of mystic symbols, followed by an anticlimactic ending presented as if meant to be a surprise.

The final story, "The Miracle of Arcachon," again starts beautifully, and the painstaking description of two little old ladies and their costumes is as exquisite as a Flemish miniature. Mood and atmosphere are created and sustained—for a while. Emotional intensity is built up—to a point. The ingredients for an impressive story are here but they are left on the stove too long. The old reliable mysticism is sprinkled on and doesn't help. Neither, of course, does the confused ending.

I haven't enjoyed writing this. There's so much that's good, so much that's brilliant in these stories that it seems impossible for their total impact to be so feeble.

East Side Scene

THE CHILDREN. By Howard Fast. New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce. 1947. 190 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by N. L. ROSEMAN

THIS is a story Howard Fast wrote twelve years ago at the beginning of his writing career, when the fearful years of New York, East Side, childhood were clearer in memory. It is the East Side scene as many others have remembered it, in all of its terrible violence, its jungle ferocity. Gangs, composed of kids from ten to sixteen, fight to the death for mastery; between gang fights the race antagonisms, black against white, gentile against Jew, Irish against Italian, make of the street a constant battlefield. Here among the children of the streets the wars of the races rage with a fury all the more horrible because they know not what they do. It seems clear that Fast offers this as a social document with a moral: here are the makings of the world of murderous prejudices. World wars, he says, are planted here in the minds of the children.

Beyond that, it is a slice of vivid, sometimes unbearable reality. I think that the brutality and drama of several years have been compressed into a few days, for the sake of story unity. And the character of Ishky, dreamer and romantic in the midst of the muck, is a little too literary for psychological accuracy. I feel that some of his inner eloquence and perception have been projected backward into him from Fast's later vantage point. Yet the story holds. It is essentially true stuff, and therefore effective and unforgettable.

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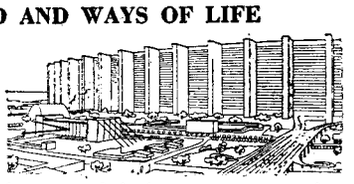

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THE POLITICIAN AS HOUSEKEEPER

(*Continued from page* 21)

ship, or at least become minister to a Central American republic.

There are striking examples of the success of this method, but I shall not be so indiscreet as to mention them!

If I were advising a young college graduate with a yearning for a political career, particularly if he were leftward in his convictions, I should advise him to join a union and through it become a leader of organized labor. Few men in America today possess greater political power than John L. Lewis, Philip Murray, and Walter Reuther. Both major parties pay them deference, and at any convenient time such men can change from union leaders to Republican or Democratic statesmen.

Law has always been a gateway to politics, but other doors are opening. Even educators have managed to elevate themselves into politicians. Mr. Fulbright was a university president before he became a Senator. President Conant of Harvard has been suggested by *Time* magazine as a good man for President, though politicians are almost certain to find him "politically unavailable." In the last election, the ex-president of Wesleyan University defeated a Wesleyan professor for the governorship of Connecticut, a post recently held for four terms by a retired dean from Yale. And in recent years many men called to Washington as expert advisors to a government agency have emerged in high political office, or at least with great political power, including Benjamin Cohen, Leon Henderson, Chester Bowles, William Benton, Averill Harriman, and William O. Douglas.

As these new avenues open, as every American citizen discovers that politics is part of his serious business, as circumstances increase the scope and authority of government, there will be less distinction between the professional politician and the politically active citizen. We will cease to think of a politician as a fat, corrupt man with a low intellect and a long cigar. This will indicate a notable advance in American democracy. The past twenty years have awakened Americans to the realistic nature of politics. As good citizens in larger numbers take an active part in public life, the realities of democratic politics can slowly be lifted to a higher plane, both of efficiency and of ideals. The recent election did not show a trend toward reaction but toward greater citizen interest in the way government affects everyone's life. There is reason to hope that American political maturity may not come too late.

Alan Valentine, President of the University of Rochester, presented the substance of the preceding article at McGill University last November. The original version emphasized two present omissions: his claims to only an amateur's knowledge of politics, and the relative ineffectiveness, in a two-party system, of the independent voter, who excludes himself from influence on primary elections.

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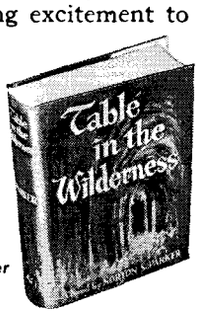

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Fresh Idiom

THE LANDSCAPE HAS VOICES. By Scott Greer. Waco, Tex.: Motive Book Shop. 1946. 30 *pp.* 40c.

Reviewed by HENRY W. WELLS

THE gratifying little booklet containing the poems of Scott Greer is an admirable example of what can be made of the poetry brochure. It is in every sense an unpretentious publication, and very wisely so, since it is clearly not a work of major importance. Happily, there is no foreword of biographical material to attract attention to the author. The booklet consists of a dozen poems making altogether an unusually well unified group of lyrics each basically self-sufficient, yet all gaining considerably by appearance within the same cover. Less would have done the author injustice and more would possibly have placed a greater strain upon him than he would have been prepared to bear.

Mr. Greer's somewhat limited range is confined to love poems and lyrics based on description of the scenery of the Pacific coast. The poetry is in a fresh and forward looking idiom. There are also some appropriate and modest evidences of a direct heritage in rhetoric and rhythm from poetry of the age of Beowulf. Greef is a more chaste Robinson Jeffers.

The woodcuts by Dorothy Dewey which accompany the poems seem especially appropriate, both because of the imagistic character of the verse and its comparatively austere and stark quality, stressing black and white, night and day, rather than an elaborate or a sophisticated color sense. Finally, the cheapness of the pamphlet, its attractive woodcuts notwithstanding, is worth noting.

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Long Sermon

YES, FAREWELL. By Michael Burn. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1947. 434 pp. $3.

Reviewed by ROBERT PICK

AS Nazi prisons went, Durheim Castle, somewhere in Saxonia—the imaginary locale of this very real book—was not among the worst. Its inmates were predominantly British officers, and with them the Germans were likely to abide by the Geneva Convention. Still, planned escape was the main preoccupation of the imprisoned. Three of them, one day, succeeded in breaking out. One of them left the others after a few days, and the two who remained were captured in sight of the Swiss border. Taken to a true Nazi prison, one of the two later was put to death for attempting to help a fellow prisoner.

It is in this prison that Mr. Burn's novel really begins—or rather, his long, long sermon. The new ideas which have swept enslaved Europe since the remaining British officer has lost his freedom in the Norway campaign seem to have penetrated the medieval walls of the castle, and more and more of the prisoners join in the earnest discussions which the one Socialist, or Communist, among them engages in. The Englishman's thoughts are thus brought to maturity.

Mr. Burn's characterizations of the various types of prisoners and their German guards; the detailed descriptions of their daily routine, their changing moods, and their physical and mental sufferings; the presentation of the impact of the war's ups and downs on the camp morale—all this, based on hard, first-hand experience, is good writing, though it has been done much better before (*e.g.*, in George Millar's "Horned Pigeon"). Mr. Burn has a remarkable knowledge of Continental history and affairs. (I noticed but one slip: a reference put into the mouth of a British prisoner early in the war, to Professor Hayek, whose work did not become known to non-academic English circles before the middle 1940's.) There is also, in the dialogue, that kind of fulness which for short stretches may pass for passionate intensity. "Yes, Farewell" is well-meaning, and not without the dignity of its author's sincere convictions. But it is a *Tendenzroman*—and whatever its tendency, such a novel should attempt to win over the reader by an engrossing story rather than by verbose intellectual debate. As it is, Mr. Burn's *Tendenzroman* makes, on the whole, tedious reading.

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Listening

"EAGLE'S BROOD"

IN radio there are two ways to go about pleading a special cause or marking a special occasion. The first, with which everyone is wearily familiar, is to round up a galaxy of stars—singers, comedians, actresses, orchestra leaders, etc., and string them all together in what is called "A Special Hour (or half hour) Broadcast Marking the Blankth Anniversary (or On Such-and-Such a Situation)." They are usually scintillating affairs, with each performer trotting out his or her pet role, song, or story, and then, as soon as the applause has died down, making a brief plea on behalf of the cause in question.

Although the motives of such programs are noble, the results are confusing. The urgency of the need is dissipated by the gaiety of the assemblage, and the relationship between noted comedians, for instance, and such things as juvenile delinquency, is never quite clear. The performers do not pretend to be experts on the subject. They are not juvenile, and they are not delinquent. They are, of course, against sin, but so is practically everybody else, and thus the point is weakened. Also, the average responsible citizen is not likely to be overly swayed by admonitions from Hollywood. The alternative is to take radio's supreme capabilities for dramaturgy, sound effects, and musical compulsion, and its capacity to reach the nation and the world instantaneously, to so project a cause or situation as to make it vital and significant to an uninformed public.

The term "documentary" describes this sort of journalism. It is not storytelling. It is documentation. It is collecting facts from many sources, and using those facts, like the ears, the trunk, the feet, and the tail, to erect the whole elephant for the blind men. A good documentary program is the surest means we have of focusing the attention of the country on a specific situation, good or bad. Such a program can be assembled relatively quickly, while the situation is critical, which is not possible with a motion picture. It can reach the entire nation simultaneously with its message, again an impossibility with either a motion picture or a newspaper series. And it takes the problem into the American household, requiring neither the effort involved in attending a movie, nor the necessity of procuring a magazine or a particular newspaper.

TO take advantage of these positive factors, the Columbia Broadcasting System last fall organized a Documentary Unit within its New York production department. This department, especially set up on the orders of William Paley, reported directly to Vice President in Charge of News and Affairs Edward Murrow. It was given the task of preparing periodic documentaries on national and international affairs—or any situation which seemed to merit the consideration of the American people as a whole.

When this unit and its objectives were announced, CBS made the promise that it would not relegate these programs to the marginal hours which sponsors do not want because of lack of listeners. These programs were promised for the peak listening times, at the cost of canceling commercial programs.

The first of these documentaries was heard last fall, on the occasion of the Nuremberg hangings. Titled "The Empty Noose" it was an adequate, if not overly exciting, re-creation of the problems and course of democratic justice in the matter of war guilt.

The first program was apparently a kind of prologue to larger undertakings, because nothing more was heard of the production unit for nearly half a year. And then, on Wednesday, March 5, from 10-11 p.m. (EST), the Documentary Unit pushed aside "Information Please," a commercial

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program, and addressed a country-wide audience. The focus was on juvenile delinquency, and it was called "Eagle's Brood."

For once a program lived up to the promises that had been made in its behalf. No expense was spared. The best time was made available, regardless of commercial commitments, and the subject was presented in all its dirt and grime. The program had a message, an important message, and no attempt was made to sugar-coat it. In short, the people at CBS realized how important the message was, and deliberately turned all their talents to setting it forth completely.

The show was the work, almost single-handed, of Robert Louis Shayon, who spent two months touring the country to get his material. He wrote his own findings into a powerful and literate script, and produced the entire thing himself.

Mr. Shayon showed juvenile delinquency to be not an isolated characteristic of misguided adolescence, but a national ill having roots in the very ways we live, and exerting its effects far beyond the boyhood of the offenders. Chapter by chapter he laid open the unhappy story of youthful gangs, of headline journalism which stimulates further offenses, of the lack of rehabilitation facilities, the brutal and candid venality of underpaid prison officials, the national housing shortage, inadequate schools and teaching, and, finally of the apathy of us all, citizens.

At the end he suggested methods of checking this cancer, methods which hitherto he found have evolved fitfully and sporadically, unpublicized and without public backing or funds, working only here and there where parents and local officials have already awakened to the urgency of the need.

Mr. Shayon did not attempt to put his work into the medium of verse, long the mainstay of documentary treatment both in radio and films. However, that was to the benefit of the subject, for radio is a medium, not merely a method. This was reporting at its cleanest and clearest, which pointed up the day-by-day tragedy of radio where, ordinarily, artistry and honesty are not supposed to have a place in general programming.

The proof, however, that maturity and literacy do pay their way in radio lies in the fact that the audience rating for this single hour program was 6.4, compared with the 7.8 which the previous occupant of the 10:00-10:30 time, "Hollywood Players," had managed to achieve over a long period of time. It even compares very happily with the 11.1 which "Information Please," a perennial favorite, customarily maintains in the 10:30-11:00 spot. These figures simply mean that people are interested in the real world about them, and that honest, adult radio will have a healthy share of listeners.

Off to this fine start, the Documentary Unit announces that it will attempt about one show a month. The next, still to be heard when this issue of *SRL* went to press, was a documentation on the state of public health in this country, scheduled for April 4. Following public health, although as yet unscheduled, are reports on labor, the occupation of Japan, and atomic energy. These will be followed by other subjects as they appear appropriate throughout the year.

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Family Man and Lover

THE PRIVATE LIFE OF NAPOLEON. By Octave Aubry. Translated from the French by Elizabeth Abbott. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co. 1947. 428 pp. $5.

Reviewed by ROGER PECK

IT must have been our own experience with dictators and world conquerors which—trying to find some solace in ill-conceived historical parallelisms—caused the recent minor vogue of new Napoleon books. Within the past year or so I counted at least three novels and four more or less scholarly volumes on Napoleonic subjects. One of the latter, Miss Creston's "In Search of Two Characters," attempted about the same thing as the late Octave Aubry's famous classic, now published for the first time in this country. Whatever one may feel toward the presentation of a towering historical personage through human-interest stories and a description of daily habits, Octave Aubry's book is still the best of which I know.

The present book shows Napoleon, above all, as a family man and a lover. On both scores Bonaparte's tragedy was immense. None of the disappointments he suffered at the hands of his Corsican clan and their miscellaneous in-laws cured him of his inborn Mediterranean sense of clan loyalty. The continuous bickerings of his greedy, vainglorious, and petty family poisoned his life; but probably he kept believing that lavishing kingdoms, fortunes, and sinecures upon his kin was sound policy. The heir of the French Revolution—and despite his arbitrariness and tyranny the Revolution's messenger and executor wherever he went—failed to realize that the dynastic system had entered its last stage in Europe. At least one of his great mistakes, the bungled Spanish adventure, can partly be accounted for by family considerations. Of all his brothers and sisters, perhaps the only one always faithful to him was Pauline Borghese, a thoroughly stupid beauty.

Except for Marie Walewska, none of Napoleon's women was faithful to him. The one woman he was infatuated with—Josephine—made him a cuckold a few months after their wedding. The little Hapsburg "doll" Marie Louise, his son's mother and the only woman he appears to have adored, turned her back on him right after his downfall, and soon leapt into the arms of a dashing lover. The others—Bellilotte or La Grassini, Mme. Branchu or Mlle. Bourgoing, Mme. de Vaudey, Mlle. George or Mme. Duchâtel, Mlle. Lacoste or Mme. Denuelle, Mme. Gazzini or Mme. Mathis, Mme. de Barral or Mlle. Guillebeau, Mme. Pellapra or the two ladies said to have been his mistresses on Elba—these all sought jewels, money, pensions, privileges or, at best, a gratification of their vanity. Napoleon was honestly loved only by Marie Walewska, the proud aristocrat who, far from being in love with him first, sacrificed her virtue to the hope that the emperor would restore her Poland to all of its ancient glory. In the whole of this often moving book there is no story more touching than hers.

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DEATH OF THE IRON VIRGIN

(*Continued from page 13*)

to describe a woman with the same freedom used for a man. Soon they used more freedom. One cause, I should say, of the breaking of the tabu, was the ancient rancor against the sexual tyranny of wife or mistress which men had been forced to leave unexpressed in print since the late 1700's. Indeed it may be said that this moral grievance had not been allowed to blow off freely since the Middle Ages, when unromantic monks, frustrated by asceticism, had told the succubus just what she was made of, and described woman in general as man's pit of misery and concealer of weapons never sanctioned by law. The desire to make woman human in books, now that she had made herself entirely human in social life, was no stronger than the pent-up desire of men to show that the "purity" of Victorian literature was the least interesting and possibly the least important of feminine attributes.

The better balanced writers of this transitional period broke the tabu, not because they were more courageous or more vindictive than their Victorian predecessors, but because they were more truly interested in women as human beings only different in provocative ways from themselves. The shrinking female needing protection from the ardent facts of life, the young girl upon whose chaste imagination no sexual truth must breathe, did not protest because they no longer existed, if indeed they had ever existed. Old-fashioned editors in the second decade of the twentieth century still believed in them. Indeed, Robert Underwood Johnson of the *Century* is said to have rejected a frankish story with horror because, as he said, his circulation list contained "expectant mothers." But with feminism realized, the iron virgin, who had never been more than a symbol, lost control of the reading lists, and died, except in the imagination of the most fearful. To be a little cynical myself, men could now write what they pleased within reason, because, in vast majority, it was the women who bought the books.

And then Freud came to general knowledge, absorbed as foreign philosophies always are absorbed by our native intellectuals, not in his whole, but only in such parts as would nourish emotional ideas already familiar and troubling the imagination. Freud said to the American creative writer (at least that is all they understood of him), sex is important without reference to the birth rate; sexual intercourse is a vitamin; without it your being may warp. Frigidity and repression cause many of the complexes which you, as a writer, have found so difficult to explain in your characters. The more advanced in our literary world accepted this thankfully—truth (a great deal of it), half-truth, and Viennese specialties—as their grandfathers had swallowed evolution without really digesting it. One result was many a short-lived reputation gained by distributing to the public in interesting form some of the facts of life hitherto undisclosed in popular literature. The valuable product, however, could in no sense be called Freudianism, or any other ism, but a background—which naturally included the sexual—for many a typical story which had been at most three-quarters told or retold. For new plots are seldom invented. It is only the motivations, the interpretations, and the conditioning of the characters which are new.

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IT takes an old civilization," declared Henry James, "to set a novelist in motion—a proposition that seems to me so true as to be a truism. It is on manners, customs, usages, habits, forms, upon all these matured and established that a novelist lives—they are the very stuff his work is made of . . ." Certainly this was the very stuff of which Anthony Trollope's work was made, as more and more readers must be discovering for themselves during the present Trollope revival. Matured and established Victorian England, with its social classes and cleavages, rules and regulations, prescriptions and taboos, ranks and orders, Church and state, commons and lords, city and county, solid virtues and potent snobberies—this was his subject matter, which he explored and used with an affectionate humor and a fecund talent that fell only just short of genius; if, indeed, it fell short at all.

The Oxford University Press, long faithful to the historian of Barsetshire, has made three more of his novels available in the World's Classics edition: "Mr. Scarborough's Family" ($1.90), "John Caldigate" ($1.90), and "The Golden Lion of Granpère" ($1.10). The first two of this trio, it should be noted, are "Double Volumes" which run to 640 and 624 pages respectively. At the same time, "The Eustace Diamonds" has, happily for our eyes, at last been put into legible type, thanks to the Modern Library ($1.10). No one of these, in my judgment, shows its author at the top of his form, displaying to the very best advantage the gifts that are peculiarly his; but they are all good and dear to true Trollopians, and the character of Lizzie Greystock, who became Lady Eustace, has made her quasi-criminal story both famous and popular. Lizzie stands a rung below Thackeray's Becky, but she stands firmly and lastingly on her own two pretty feet. Plot looms large in the account of Mr. Scarborough's evasions of the law of entail, as it does in the narration of John Caldigate's embroilment with the law against bigamy, while in neither does humor play the pervasive part that Trollope knows how to make it play. In "Scarborough," however, humor does glow warmly though briefly during Mr. Prosper's courtship of Miss Thoroughbung (which is absolutely first rate); and in "Caldigate" the Australian scenes are a novelty. "The Golden Lion of Granpère" is another Continental excursion, comparable to "Linda Tressel" and "Nina Balatka," in which the author ties one simple knot, and unties it with an abundance of sentiment. A trifle, this story of the Vosges mountains, wherein the love of two simple hearts does not run smooth—but a pleasing trifle.

Who would believe it possible to walk from a novel by Trollope into a novel by Henry James, without jolt or jar? Yet it can be done, at least in the case of one James novel, and probably only one: "Washington Square," which you will find in "The American Novels and Stories of Henry James," edited with an introduction by F. O. Matthiessen (Knopf, $5.). At his least complex, James exploits the kind of situation which Trollope knew well; Dr. Sloper and his daughter could have breathed Barsetshire air with comfort; while Trollope might easily have put his signature to the portrait of Mrs. Penniman. But in "The Europeans," which preceded "Washington Square," and in "The Bostonians" and "The Ivory Tower" (unfinished), which came after it, no man or woman by Trollope could manage to breathe at all. "The Europeans" may be only a comedy sketch, but it is pure Jacobean, and, however light the author's touch, it is exquisitely subtle, exquisitely sure. In "The Bostonians," on the contrary, he has labored heavily and breathed hard. His analysis of character is redundant almost beyond bearing, and his final melodramatic scene is, quite simply, absurd. But one may find major faults in "The Bostonians," and still respect it as a partial success; or, shall we say, a substantial failure? Mr. Matthiessen has provided his four novels and nine stories, which run to almost a thousand pages, double column, with an informed, unpretentious introduction.

As companion reading to James, let me recommend E. M. Forster's admirable "Aspects of the Novel" (Harcourt, Brace, $2.50), which even the best informed student of fiction may read with profit and delight. And for comparative reading, following a hint of Mr. Matthiessen's, you may turn from "Washington Square" to Balzac's "Eugénie Grandet," which shares with "Père Goriot" a new Modern Library volume ($1.10).

BEN RAY REDMAN.

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BRONZINO'S MIXTURE

(*Continued from page 14*)

said. We invented it for the reprint trade."

There was a small label on the bottle: BRONZINO'S MIXTURE. *Lethamins G and D. Caution, take only as directed.*

"The true Lethean liqueur," said Lorry. "This really wipes your eye. Take a small slug after finishing a book, you forget it at once and can read it again like fresh—if you want to. The greater impression the book made on you the better you forget. Washes your mind."

"And the reviews of the book, and the ads—do you forget them too?" I asked hopefully.

Lorry smiled. How well Collectors know that sad, faint, alluring, and detachable smile.

"I always keep a bottle in the medicine cabinet," he said. "When I read in the middle of the night I dose myself and go off like a movie star. Just remember, you have to finish the book before using the mixture."

"Mr. Lorrequer," said his young woman, "Atwater's on the wire again. Wants to know is Irwin Edman in a binding yet?"

"We have Edman gilt top, but only in fabrikoid."

"He says," she reported, "If you haven't got Edman, Santayana might do?"

Lorry, even Lorry, was getting a little impatient. "Tell him we have Dr. Johnson's 'Lives of the Poets,' first edition, four volumes in full calf, only $40. By the time he's read that, Edman will be in rag, and probably in a box."

People were pressing forward to ask him how you could get your name put on the waiting list to join the Book-of-the-Month Club, so I grabbed a bottle of his literary laudanum and fled to the counter near the door where they keep reprints of Conrad: "Typhoon," and "The Nigger," and that other one (I never mention its title; the perfect fancy of man overtaken by Fate; few will ever read or ponder it; I have small assurance of man's curiosity for poetic truth). But before I went back into Bivalve's, to see if Gus had yet brought the finnan haddie, I took a quick taste of Bronzino's Mixture.

It went down like smooth-sliding Mincius: sweetly tart, and fumy, and ticklish on the tongue. I stood there on the pavement, mouthing it over, and thought wouldn't it be wonderful! To take it as chaser after reading anything, and so forget the story at once. I know now why poor De Quincey drank tincture of opium. The enemies of art are those who remember too well, and who carry into it their own prejudicial private circumstances. That's being a customer, not a collaborator. I don't give a damn for reading unless I can create it along with the struggling fool who wrote it.

But it only applies, Lorry warned me, to the last thing you have read. You must be sure to know what you want to forget. That's not always easy. There are lots of things that memory can turn sweet.

So if I was kind of dopey (Dove concluded; gathering his hat and coat and bag; we were just coming in to the smooth-sliding platform at Jamaica, L. I.) it's because I took a slug of Bronzino's Mixture this afternoon. The amazing thing is, it works.

* * *

There was only a moment, but when I really need to know I can ask questions fast.

"Wait a minute," I cried. "What was it you were so keen to forget? Was it the Long Island timetable? Or don't you even remember what it was you've forgotten?"

"Good old boy," he said kindly, with a peculiar smile. "It was something of yours."

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. "Anthony Adverse," by Hervey Allen. 2. Briar Rose, in "The Sleeping Beauty," by Grimm. 3. Matthew Maule, in "The House of Seven Gables," by Nathaniel Hawthorne. 4. Dan Tobin, in "Tobin's Palm," by O. Henry. 5. The skipper, in "The Wreck of the Hesperus," by Longfellow. 6. Captain Ahab, in "Moby Dick," by Herman Melville. 7. "Julius Caesar," by Shakespeare. 8. "Macbeth," by Shakespeare. 9. "Oedipus Rex," by Sophocles. 10. "Siegfried," by Wagner.

Dylan Thomas

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James Laughlin

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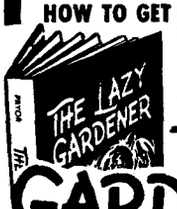

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The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, and Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
THE QUEEN'S FALCON *Ernest E. Blau* (McKay: $2.)	Carnival owners Harry and Eva Fay gruesomely slain by someone after their 16th-century Cellini - clasped falconry book. Local police officiate.	Hell-broth of modern murder and Medician malignance with criminal eliminating self by method that remains to be proved. Plenty of action.	Capably done melodrama
DEADLINE *Alexander Irving* (Dodd, Mead: $2.50)	Westchester dept. store ad-writer (girl) fatally bashed. Lieut. Sinclair, and helpful friend, investigate numerous very hot suspects.	Convincing and colorful "decor," sweet lot of slippery characters, now-you-see-it-now-you-don't plot and exceptional sleuth.	First-rate
MY TRUE LOVE LIES *Lenore Glen Offord* (Duell, Sloan & Pearce: $2.50)	Body of murdered "big time mouthpiece" found beneath plaster coating in San Francisco sculptor's workshop. Inspector Geraghty handles case.	Nice, young Navy girl and officer swain deeply involved in swiftly-paced, well-worked-out, and especially well-characterized tale.	Good on all counts
BLOOD RED DEATH *Minna Bardon* (Phoenix: $2.)	Strange death of fat woman called "Duchess" begins almost unparalleled carnival of small-town killing, solved by 'tec "Giant" Antwerp.	Hydroponic tomatoes; amnesiac wife and bigamous — or worse — husband etc., make it (page 241) "all so artificial and unreal."	Gosh!
CARGO OF FEAR *Jay L. Currier* (Messner: $2.)	Pal of ex-combat flier slain near Hollywood. Avenging friend follows trail that leads to Mexico and free-shooting California conclusion.	Rapid-fire tale of dope-running, gang violence, sultry dames, and hero who takes terrific chances and copious punishment.	Tough and torrid
THE CHAIR FOR MARTIN ROME *Henry Edward Helseth* (Dodd, Mead: $2.50)	Captured cop-killer breaks gaol, clinches responsibility for another robbery-slaying; shields girl he loves; gets caught again—and burns.	Just about most real and convincing tough-job that has come in season too full of this genre. Not easily forgettable.	Excellent—in its class
THE BANDAGED NUDE *Robert Finnegan* (Simon & Schuster: $2.)	Reporter-sleuth Banion identifies corpse of murdered artist on its way to incinerator, keeps knowledge to himself, and ultimately cracks double killing.	Plenty of movement and violent activity in tale of vanished paintings and artists' loose lives in California—but it rambles.	Fair
THE TWIN KILLING *George Bagby* (Crime Club: $2.)	New York gambler shot in barbershop. Two young baseball players chief suspects. Inspector Schmidt officiates.	Convincing portraits of ballplayers and Broadway characters, also humorous passages, are better than plot.	Good enough
THE FABULOUS CLIP JOINT *Fredric Brown* (Dutton: $2.50)	Murder of bibulous but much loved Pop starts eighteen-year-old Chicago boy and "carny"-worker Uncle on checkered chase.	No masterpiece of detection, but people, especially Ed and Uncle Ambrose, are capitally done. Action fast and tough. Background colorful.	Steak *Tartare*
ANOTHER MAN'S POISON *Hugh Holman* (Mill: $2.50)	Impossible cyaniding of white-supremacy Congressman in Southern city and violent treatment of other characters give visiting Sheriff Macready tough assignment.	Precious crew of heels, cads, rabble-rousers, and two-timers neatly brought to book by believable sleuthing of rural "nincompoop."	Agreeable
ANOTHER WOMAN'S HOUSE *Mignon G. Eberhart* (Random House: $2.50)	Unexpected liberation of wife illegally convicted of murder upsets two lives and ends another before harassed girl untangles knotty case.	Emotional roller-coaster ride with sizzling succession of ups and downs. It all comes out trite in end.	"One man's meat"

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The New Recordings

COMPOSITION, PERFORMER, ALBUM NUMBER, NUMBER OF RECORDS	ENGINEERING		PERFORMANCE AND CONTENT
	Recording Technique	*Surface*	
HAYDN, QUARTET, OP. 74, #3. ("The Horseman") Budapest Quartet. Columbia X 274 (2) $3.	Could be better. Too dead — this would benefit from some artificial echo. Hi-fi, but strings sound pinched.	A—	Not quite as good ensemble as in best older Budapests; still outstanding, pleasure to hear.
PURCELL, GORDIAN KNOT UNTIED, suite. Saidenberg Little Symphony, Saidenberg. (2 10″ plastic)	Somewhat disappointing tonally—seems rather narrow in range, lacks tonal breadth, tho superior to earlier string Purcell recording.	AA to A— (*plastic*)	Excellent performance of Purcell string music, though minus harpsichord continuo. Barber will shock his conservative friends. "Capricorn" is fully modern, dissonant, based on 18th-cent. concerto grosso, Stravinsky influenced. Solo group, flute, oboe, trumpet, plus strings. A significant work of development.
BARBER, CAPRICORN CONCERTO. Saidenberg Little Symphony, soloists. Concert Hall Society. (2 plastic) (*Subscription releases; not separately available.*)	This one better—more brilliant, solos come through well, notably trumpet. Fine balance.	AA (*plastic*)	
TCHAIKOWSKY, EUGEN ONEGIN; POLONAISE, WALTZ. Hallé Orch. Sargent. Columbia 71929-D (1) $1.	Another import—big, resonant, lots of bass, broad effect typical of European recording.	A	Pleasant Tchaikowsky trifles, with lots of umpha from the brass. Very British sounding.

MORE NEEDLE POINTERS

HERE are a few pointers on needles that have come my way from various sources since the July 20 column on needles:

No question about it now, given proper pickup weight (one ounce or so) the jewel point is rapidly becoming the best bet. For heavy pickups it is still too delicate and the hard metal semi-permanent is more practical. But weights are rapidly lessening and the chances of knocking your jewel askew are growing correspondingly less. In any case the trend towards built-in needles is gradually removing the choice from the consumer's hands. Probably just as well.

The bent shank needle (S shape), as I understand it, has two valuable advantages in theory. One, by dividing the length of the needle into calculatedly unequal pieces it effectively kills the natural resonance of the needle itself and thus cuts out one source of distortion. Two, the spring action of the bent section helps to absorb up-and-down vibrations, to which most pickups are sensitive. (The music is side-to-side.) Up-and-down irregularities in the bottom of the groove account for a lot of scratchy noise; the pinching effect that forces the needle to rise out of the groove on sharp curves adds more up-and-down effect and more unwanted noise. (Note, some of the new radical pickups are entirely insensitive to this "vertical component," a very great advantage.) For these reasons it might be wise to try the S-curve needle if you haven't already.

The built-in jewel is a nuisance when it wears out or is damaged—but it has advantages too. One, it is much smaller and lighter; hence it moves more easily (lower inertia) and responds more readily to the record, especially in the higher tones. It can give superior reproduction, and is a necessity for the fanciest high fidelity. Two—a very practical matter—it nearly always comes with a spring guard which makes damage far less likely.

One rather distressing habit of any "permanent" needle in the new higher fidelity pickups is to make known via unpleasant buzzings and rattlings the slightest mismatching between needle point and the shape of the groove. Unfortunately, needle shape is not yet entirely standardized, nor apparently is the shape of the cutting needle that makes the groove. You may find that one record is painfully fuzzy, the next sharp and clear. Not much you can do right now except grit your teeth—though it is my impression that after several playings some of this distortion tends to disappear.

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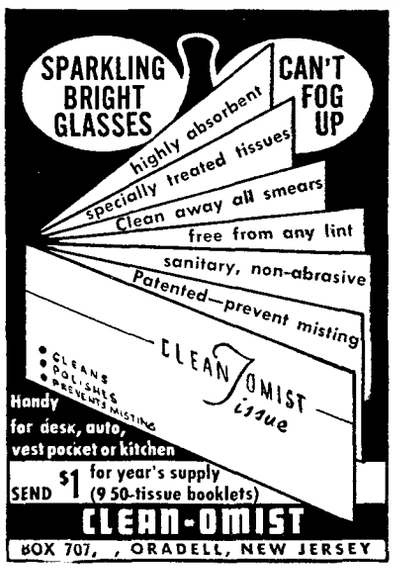

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Spring Letter from Mrs. Kingsley

BELATED thanks for many friendly Christmas messages and warmest Spring Greetings to our DCers!

A curiously stimulating discussion was raised by Joseph B. Maclean, New York, when he challenged my use of "o'Shanter" as the last name of Burns's hero in the poem thus titled. For proof he had only his own experience and that of Scotch friends who had never heard of a Scotchman called O' anything. But along comes our erudite standby, Steven Byington, who roasts me in no gentle terms for the error: A Scottish name like Tam o' Shanter, in which the "o" means "of" and properly takes the apostrophe (and space) and not the capital, is to be carefully distinguished from an Irish name like O'Brien, in which the "O" is to all practical intents and purposes a synonym of *Mac*, is capitalized as *Mac* is, and is written without space as *Mac* is, and its apostrophe is a mere traditionally established blunder, a monument to the ignorance of somebody who once imagined that this "o" meant "of" and consequently set the fashion of writing the name with an apostrophe. O'Brien is a surname, hereditary as such; o'Shanter is not. And he illustrates his point liberally by illustrations from Scott's novels.

Some old-timers, whose judgments I value, accuse me of making the current DC's too difficult. In this thirteenth year of evolving DC's am I not obliged to avoid too much repetition, and am I not entitled to the joy of discovering new words as I scan the pages of my WNI in search of utilizing combinations of letters presented by the quotation in hand? And wouldn't you grasp at new finds in your reading, like *logodaedaly* in Sedgwick's "The Happy Profession"? An unfamiliar acrostic like that of Connolly's "The Condemned Playground" is bound to make the DC more difficult. My use of him just before his appearance on the radio program "The Author Meets the Critics" was one of those rare coincidences in which I revel. I had dropped into the library of Macmillan on lower Fifth Avenue and my eye caught a pile of books on one of the tables, awaiting, I was told, the autograph of the author. I was fortunate enough to catch sight of the author in an adjoining room and to carry away, at my request, a copy of the book before he appeared. Thomas Heggen's "Mister Roberts" must have been made easier by that glowing full-page ad in the front of the issue. I had selected that special book for that issue about current American novels some time before the DC's publication, as I had my Ambrose Bierce quotation months before the article about him in the *SRL* appeared.

Continuing on the subject of words, I cite the challenge of T. R. Rollo, Mendota, Wis., as objecting to my meaning of *rumbelow* (taken from WNL) as "a *meaningless* refrain." He contends that it meant just what it said to tired, overworked, cold seamen—*rum below* when their work was done. Mr. Rollo, although a civil engineer, evinces his interest in sea chanties by sending me a stirring one

he has just composed on that same theme, "Rumbelow." I'm sorry not to have space to quote it at length.—The definition of *impugnable* as *unconquerable* was questioned by Mrs. Margaret Malcolmson, now of Amherst, Mass., and by Miss Mary E. Mathews, Birmingham, Ala. Until I heard from them it had never occurred to me that there were *two* words of similar spelling but different meanings, dependent upon whether the syllables were divided after *g* or *n!* "Mrs. Partington," as a creation of Sydney Smith, and not of Benjamin P. Shillaber, was objected to by L. R. Jackson, Philadelphia, whereas my "Oxford Companion to American Literature" explained how Shillaber really took the idea from Sydney Smith. Henry Dennison, Framingham, Mass., wondered whether the name of the Governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony should not be spelled with an *e* instead of an *i*, but either seems correct today, Hawthorne in his story having used the *i*. *Duct of Steno* grew out of a personal experience and seems to have enlightened you as well as myself. When my doctor assured me that the cause of a painful two weeks' affliction was a swollen *parotid* gland, I, as usual, consulted my WNL and learned much! I've still another word in that connection for you when the time comes. Winthrop H. Hopkins, Deposit, N. Y., called my attention to an error in Series 19, Puzzle No. 10 in the acrostic, in which I spelled the first name of Humphries as *Rolphe* instead of *Rolfe*. A friend of the poet's mother, Mr. Hopkins explained that the poet came by the name as a family name of friends, whereas no doubt I had subconsciously tried to adapt it from the more familiar Ralph.

Mrs. John H. Love, Port Washington, N. Y., shared with us a grateful letter from a clergyman just arrived for work in China, who had received the *SRL* from Mrs. Love after she had erased the DC marks first made by her. It seems that the name of the clergyman was allotted to Mrs. Love by the Church Periodical Club, which shares its magazines with foreign countries. Quite a commendable project, isn't it? Mrs. S. W. Carson, Muncie, Indiana, sent us an illustrated clipping from a Muncie newspaper showing Mrs. Martha Ivins celebrating her ninetieth birthday working a DC. The latter, now of Indianapolis, had been a Muncie teacher of Mrs. Carson's. The *SRL* was pleased, too, to hear of an experiment Miss E. F. McKey, Weston High School, Mass., was making in her sophomore English class in which she utilizes our DC's, even to enlisting the parents in the scheme through contagion. And they liked the jingle Mrs. Nichols Clark's niece sent to Mrs. Clark of Vera Cruz, Calif., in response to a Christmas gift of a subscription to *SRL*. In the form of a DC, in solution it read:

A present surpassed by very few
Is *The Saturday Review:*
Its squibs and crypts, its quips and prose
By Cerf, John Brown, and William Rose,—
Laurel garlands by the dozens
Can we give to Norman Cousins.
Your kindness great to so procure
For us this boon to literature!

If any of you are in the vicinity of Middlebury, Vt., this coming summer, do look me up at the Inn. The lure of that magnificent, yet friendly, country, takes me back for DC research work from early June through September. My mention of that place in our Christmas page stirred fond memories in the heart of Mrs. Cornelia Kellogg, Morristown, N. J., whose father-in-law, once an instructor in the college there, returned every year to help out at commencement, and years later, on his death, was buried from the impressive College Chapel on the heights. Doesn't the name of Kellogg evoke in you older folk nostalgic thoughts of diagrams from "Reed and Kellogg," to aid us to understand the thought of sentences, a process no longer considered essential today?

Lack of space prevents my mentioning all those who have expressed their appreciation of our page in the Christmas issue and have asked for a return of the weekly column. And there are many more whose letters since then have appealed to me.

ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY.

Journey in Time

By Norma Lay

TRAIN-WAKING, lifted the shade
on girders gigantic-dark above
water fog. Discovered
a moment beyond the bridge the basic
morning. Lay with afterimage a blue
radiance under closed
eyelids, saw bridge girders
iridescent in surge to light.

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DOUBLE-CROSTIC NO. 681

Reg. U. S. Patent Office

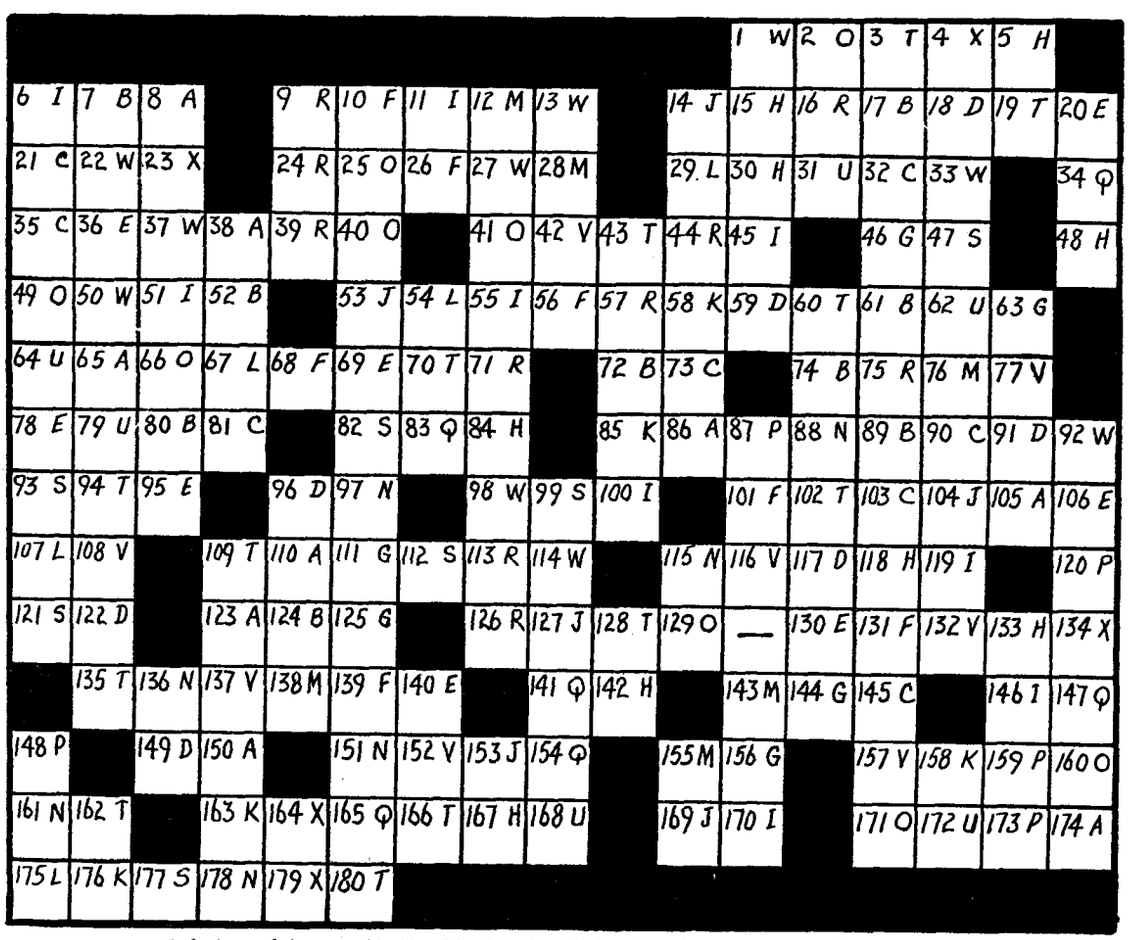
By Elizabeth S. Kingsley

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
A. Character in "Barnaby Rudge," conceited and bumptious (Last name).	123 65 174 110 150 86 105 38 8
B. Of uniform weight.	124 7 74 61 72 80 52 89 17
C. Name of four popes.	145 103 90 73 81 21 35 32
D. Term applied to country remote from the seaboard in Australia.	96 91 122 149 117 59 18
E. Pieces of wood, stone, or the like suitable for throwing (Colloq.).	36 69 20 95 130 106 78 140
F. Play by Shakespeare.	56 68 10 101 131 139 26
G. A set speech, as in Greek drama (Gr.).	111 144 125 156 46 63
H. Father of Alfred the Great, King of West Saxons, Bishop of Winchester.	84 48 30 167 5 133 15 118 142
I. Greek architect of the Propylaea of the Acropolis in Athens (c. 437 B.C.).	146 6 11 170 51 55 119 100 45
J. Northern constellation in the Milky Way whose bright star is Altair.	169 14 53 127 104 153
K. Loud, shrill barks.	158 176 163 85 58
L. The glossopharyngeal nerve (Anat.).	107 67 54 29 175
M. To grub up, as trees (Old Eng. Law).	155 28 12 138 76 143
N. Rapids (U.S.).	151 178 97 88 161 136 115
O. Two vowel sounds joined in one syllable to form one speech sound.	129 160 171 2 41 49 25 66 40
P. Hard durable wood, species *Diospyros*, from tropical Asia or Africa.	87 159 173 120 148
Q. In the Talmudic period, prayer; also the liturgy (Jewish Relig.).	147 34 141 154 165 83
R. English novelist and critic (1884-).	71 126 16 39 113 44 24 9 75 57
S. Pertaining to or containing sulphur (Chem.).	82 99 112 121 47 93 177
T. State of being widely extended.	70 102 135 3 128 109 60 166 19 94 43 162 180
U. An Indian macaque found in zoölogical gardens.	172 79 31 168 62 64
V. Most unlike.	132 137 116 77 42 152 157 108
W. Cleansing agents or solvents, like water and soap.	37 13 98 33 92 114 50 22 27 1
X. American poet from Iowa (1908-).	164 134 23 4 179

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Read up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).



Solution of last week's Double-Crostic will be found on page 46 of this issue.

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the Phoenix Nest

THESPIAN

HE played his part hilariously
well,
The critics in pronouncing are
specific.
A star is found whose lustre one
should tell
Dear friends about. His talent is ter-
rific.
His ready art accomplishing the feat
Of tottering while limbs are most de-
pendable,
To simulate the drunkard on the
street,
Is vivid and exultingly commendable.

Each gesture throws more glamor
on the play:
He makes his fellow-players look
quite rustic.
Our merry crowd continues on its way
Exuberant with praising and prog-
nostic.
Turning, we see our new ascended
star . . .
Who staggers from the theatre to a
bar.

MARIO SPERACIO.

* * *

Here are some random observations upon an American poet who is an admirable subject for resurrection.

The first book by Louise Imogen Guiney was published in 1884, when she was twenty-three. I well remember when I originally read excerpts from her work in "The Younger American Poets," by Jessie B. Rittenhouse, brought out in Boston forty-two years ago, and now excessively rare. Those were the days when a Boston paper reminded us of what Bliss Carman said of L. I. G. as she appeared "on the wintry downs, by the Scituate sea," at the hour when

> . . . By the early train
> Light-hearted mirth will come again
> To race across-lots with a crew
> Of St. Bernards . . . contagious Lou!

and a Boston paper added:

> Whoso loiters along the ways that lead from sober Pinckney Street to the "long mall" of the old Common, may chance to see "Contagious Lou"—that is only one of the hundred quaint friend-names of Boston's shyest, highest woman singer, Louise Guiney—speeding light as "rifle-smoke blown on the wind," beside majestic Lillo, highest—but not at all shyest!—of Boston's St. Bernards. Something of Boston, as old Boston lives in the hearts of its lovers, is in that picture. The simplicity of large and certain achievement: the fearlessness of conventions, the life above the bondage of the accidental.

I recall that Miss Rittenhouse's quotation of a particular poem by Miss Guiney, "A Friend's Song for Simoisius"—which now, by the way, draws commendation from the editors of the recent "A History of American Poetry"—was incomplete. The editors mentioned take their full version directly from Miss Guiney's last book, "Happy Ending," but Miss Rittenhouse omitted the verse, "With footstep separate and slow—etc." And its place in the poem was apparently shifted from after to before the following verse, later on, because, with her "passion for perfection," the poet was forever correcting and amending her work. Miss Rittenhouse also omitted the final verse. In this verse the last line before the refrain was changed by L. I. G. from the original version reading "To save us from the perishing."

That matter of refrain in "A Friend's Song" is interesting. It appears after every verse, in "A Roadside Harp" first published in 1893. Later on L. I. G. dropped the refrain, save after the first and last verses. To me, the monotonous repetition of it after each verse, as I first read the poem, lent it an elegiac value that the later version does not have. Some words Miss R. had to say of Miss Guiney's work then, should be valuable to poets now:

> She uses figure and symbol with an individual freshness of conception, but always that which is structural with the thought, so that one can rarely detach a stanza or even fugitive lines of her poems without loss of value. She develops the theme without over-developing it, which is the restraint of the artist.

Scholarship with an ecclesiastical tinge finally so absorbed the Catholic poet that it impeded the flow of original composition. But what a workman and craftsman she was! This is shown best if one will examine an early pamphlet, "Nine Sonnets Written at Oxford," decorated by Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue and privately issued by Herbert Copeland and F. H. Day on Christmas 1895, printed by the

University Press in Cambridge, Mass.; and then look at the textual changes in these sonnets as they appear in "Happy Ending." I am indebted for the pamphlet mentioned, as I am for many reliques of and books by Miss Guiney, and a unique portrait, to the extraordinary generosity of Mrs. May I. O'Brien of Marshfield, Mass. Mrs. O'Brien has also, in the same spirit, sent me bound files of the old *Chap-Book*, published by Stone & Kimball, both in its original small monthly size and in its later larger fortnightly format. Among these many numbers, that for June 15, 1895, opens with L. I. G.'s famous "On the Fly-Leaf of Clarendon's History of the Rebellion" set in antique type, a poem rather made fun of by the editors of "A History of American Poetry," as unlikely to have been appreciated by a favorite of the poets, Lord Falkland—or by John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester! But whatever Lucius Cary (Secretary of State in 1642, who reluctantly joined the King's side and got himself killed at Newbury) might have thought of the enthusiasm of the poem for the "starry cavaliers," the later Lionel Johnson, who wrote magnificently on the statue of King Charles I, would, I am sure, have applauded it. I myself hold no brief for the Stuarts, and think The Divine Right of Kings one of the worst ideas ever hatched in the human brain; but, nevertheless, Miss Guiney wrote here quite as well as most of the Cavalier poets, and that is high praise. A poem of hers that her modern historians somehow resist quoting shall end my remarks. It is from "The Martyrs' Idyl" of 1899—and, again to advert to emendations, Miss Guiney first wrote the second line of the last verse, "Nor wall in clay mine agonies and joys." It was changed, in "Happy Ending" to "And wander free amid my freeborn joys." Maybe mistakenly, I like it as printed here:

DEO OPTIMO MAXIMO

All else for use, one only for desire;
Thanksgiving for the good, but
thirst for Thee:
Up from the best, whereof no man
need tire.
Impel Thou me.

Delight is menace, if Thou brood
not by,
Power a quicksand, Fame a gather-
ing jeer.
Oft as the morn, (though none of
earth deny
These three are dear,)

Wash me of them, that I may be re-
newed,
Nor wall in clay activities and joys:
O close my hand upon Beatitude!
Not on her toys.

A bientot.

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

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(Continued on page 74)

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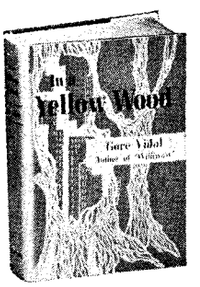

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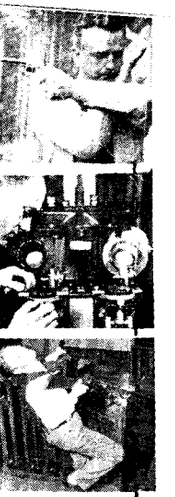

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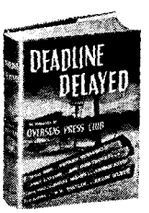

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